

THE DOCTOR'S DOUBLE

BY NAT COULD



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m, Sir, yours truly,
ppetite it will enforce,
elp the system in its course;
ps you've ate or drank too much,
l restore like magic touch.
ssion, with its fearful sway,
ves electric-like away;
the blood is found impure,
fect a perfect cure.

rom danger, free from harm,
s like some magician's charm;
y time a dainty draught,
a will dispel disease's shaft;
priceless than the richest gold,
ver did its wealth unfold,
ll throughout our native land
d always have it at command."

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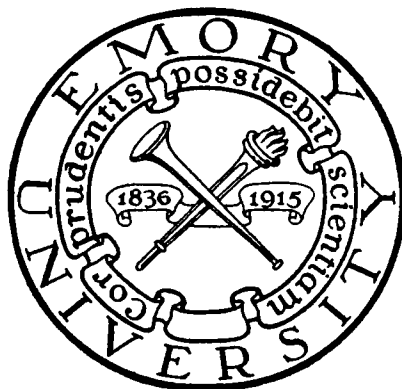
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THE DOCTOR'S DOUBLE

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BY

NAT GOULD

AUTHOR OF 'THE DOUBLE EVENT'

LONDON

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS, LIMITED

BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL

MANCHESTER AND NEW YORK

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THE DOCTOR'S DOUBLE

CHAPTER I.

A STRANGE SCENE.

THE clock in the great tower at Westminster boomed out one long sound that echoed over the dark waters of the Thames, and was lost in the distance.

All was bustle and excitement in the vicinity of the Houses of Parliament. An interesting debate had taken place on the never-ending Irish Question, and the Government had won a victory by a substantial majority.

Hansoms were driving rapidly away, and the police on duty were surveying the scene with their usual apathy.

These guardians of the peace had seen similar crowds on so many occasions that they would have been glad of a sensation for a change.

Dr. Dane hurried out of the House, anxious to make the best of his way home.

He had made a good speech on the Government side, and been complimented by his chief.

As he passed through the gateway, a man said to him in a tone of surprise:

‘Good-night, Dr. Dane. I did not see you return to the House.’

‘Probably not,’ replied the doctor, smiling; ‘I have not been out of the House since seven o’clock.’

‘Not been out of the House!’ exclaimed the man in amazement. ‘I spoke to you myself half an hour ago as you came through the gate.’

‘You made a mistake, Hare,’ replied Dr. Dane. ‘I am rather surprised at it, considering I am so well known to you.’

‘I must have made a mistake,’ said Simeon Hare, ‘if you have not been out of the House since seven. I’m not a believer in anything supernatural, as you know, doctor, and my nerves are well under control; but if ever I saw a man’s double, I saw yours to-night.’

Dr. Dane gave a slight start of surprise, which did not escape the notice of Simeon Hare. He merely shrugged his shoulders, and said:

‘You must have seen someone uncommonly like me, Hare. Good-night, and do not dream about my double.’

Dr. Dane got into a hansom and was driven home.

His house was a large one, such as are often to be found in many of the London squares.

It was quite a doctor's residence. The exterior was a remarkably good advertisement of the occupation of the tenant.

Dr. Dane paid his cabman, went slowly up the steps, and let himself in with his latch-key.

He felt a strange, uneasy feeling creeping over him as he took off his coat in the hall.

Then he went into his study, sat down in an easy-chair, lighted a cigar, and contemplated the smoke curling upwards.

'Wonder what makes me feel so uncomfortable?' he said to himself. 'There's a peculiar uncanny smell about the house to-night. If Hare is correct, I can only arrive at one conclusion—that Frank has escaped again. Poor beggar, what a life! and yet he's not safe to be left alone. Clever fellow, too, much cleverer man than I am. I shall never forget the last time he escaped ;' and Dr. Dane shuddered at the mere thought. 'What a terrible hatred he has of me! and yet, God knows, I have done all I can for him. The place is private, and he is well looked after. Still, when he has sane moments, as he most certainly has, his position must be awful. It is those sane moments I fear. He forgets then that he is ever otherwise, and this fosters his bitter feeling towards me. I'll have a whisky-and-soda, and then turn in. I hope I shall not be called up to-night, for I'm dead tired.'

Dr. Dane helped himself from the liqueur-stand,

and, feeling better after his stimulant, went upstairs to his bedroom.

It was only a few minutes before he was fast asleep.

Then a strange and most extraordinary thing occurred.

A man entered the doctor's study, sat in the easy-chair just vacated, lighted a cigar, and proceeded to enjoy himself.

This man was the exact counterpart of Dr. Dane, who had just gone upstairs to bed.

He had the same clean-shaved face, the same dark curly hair, the same complexion. He was the exact height of Dr. Dane ; in every respect he resembled him save one, and that was in the eyes.

The man's eyes were the same blue as Dr. Dane's, but there was a weird look in them. Simeon Hare would have sworn they were the eyes of Dr. Dane when he gave the start of surprise on receiving the information that he (Hare) had seen the doctor's double.

In every respect except his dress this man was the living image of Dr. Dane. The remarkable likeness would have deceived the cutest detective, the most expert lawyer, or the cleverest physiognomist.

Dr. Dane could not be distinguished from this man provided they were dressed alike.

Even to a slight mark on the neck they were the same.

This man who now occupied Dr. Dane's chair, and copied his manners and actions in every particular, was none other than his twin brother, Frank Dane.

The unfortunate man was insane; but his insanity was of such a nature that it deceived the cleverest physicians.

Frank Dane was insane, and knew it. As he sat in his brother's chair, he was thinking over his insanity, actually trying to argue with his saner half that he was perfectly sound of mind. It was one of his sane moments, one of those times when the unsound mind wanders for a brief period into the realms of sanity.

It was in such moments as these that Dr. Dane positively feared his brother. To look at Frank Dane as he sat calmly smoking in Dr. Dane's chair, no one would have doubted his sanity.

As a matter of fact, the balance at this particular moment was on the side of sanity.

'So, my dear brother, you have gone to rest,' said Frank Dane in a half-whispering voice—a voice almost unearthly in its similarity to Dr. Dane's. 'Sleep on, and take thy rest,' he chuckled. The mad side was evidently uppermost in this almost fiendish chuckle of exultation. 'I've not been educated for a doctor for nothing. Oh dear no! not a bit of it. Of course I'm mad, and my dear brother allowed me to amuse myself by studying for the profession. What's that?' he exclaimed with a start. 'Nothing. Phew! I thought it was

my attendant. That reminds me : he'll be missing me before early morning. I must to work. I believe it's a good thing to be a bit mad. There's such a lot of excuses made for a man when, as the good folks put it, he's off his nut. I nearly cracked my nut getting out of that infernal hole. Fell on my head. Clear proof there's nothing inside to damage. Wonder how the Prince of Wales is! Oh, I forgot ; that's nothing to do with the matter in hand.'

Frank Dane carefully examined the study. Then he went into another room, where he evidently knew Dr. Dane kept drugs with which he experimented.

He selected a small phial, poured some of the contents on to his handkerchief, and then, taking off his boots, crept upstairs.

There was a glare in his eyes now that would have made a bold man tremble.

Frank Dane opened the door of his brother's room noiselessly and stole in.

Dr. Dane was asleep. Frank Dane crept to the bedside, and then, with lightning-like rapidity, pressed the handkerchief over Dr. Dane's face.

Dr. Dane gave a deep sigh and then remained motionless.

Frank Dane, as he stood beside his brother's bed, was his living image. The two men were unnaturally alike.

Mr. Dane's next move was to undress himself and put on his brother's clothes. He stripped

himself and put on every article his brother had worn that night.

Then he dressed the insensible man roughly in his discarded clothes.

It was a difficult task, but Frank Dane was a strong man, and he was also determined ; and, moreover, he was not sane, which accounted for many of his peculiar actions.

He left the clothes loose about Dr. Dane's neck, tossed the bedclothes about, and then proceeded to wrestle with a chair, imitating a struggle between two powerful men.

When he had concluded this extraordinary performance the room bore every appearance of a struggle having taken place.

Frank Dane looked at his watch, or, more correctly speaking, his brother's, which he now wore, and saw it was half-past five.

He left Dr. Dane in bed, and went downstairs.

Then he touched the electric bell communicating with the man-servant's room, and calmly awaited the result.

In a few minutes the man opened the door, and asked what the doctor wanted.

Frank Dane stood with his back to the fireplace and calmly surveyed the man.

He saw it was James Fairton, who had been in Dr. Dane's employ about five years.

'Did you hear anything peculiar in the night?' asked Frank Dane.

'No, sir,' said James Fairton, who had not the

remotest idea it was not Dr. Dane standing before him.

‘That’s strange. I’ve had an awful time of it. You know my poor brother Frank?’

James Fairton nodded.

‘He escaped again last night. I met him outside the house. I managed to induce him to come in. Then he wanted to go to my room. I humoured him. He had no sooner got inside than he flew at me. We had an awful struggle, but I overpowered him at last. He fainted on the bed, and I chloroformed him to prevent his coming round too soon. He is upstairs now, lying on the bed. Just go and look if he is all right. Then I want you to drive to Dr. Simpson’s asylum at once, and tell them he is here. Bring someone back with you to take him away. I cannot bear to see him leave the house, so do not be surprised if I am out when you return. You had better have him watched while you are away; I cannot face another scene like that of last night.’

‘I will get Morley and the coachman from next door to keep guard,’ said James Fairton. ‘I’ll go and look at him now.’

James Fairton entered Dr. Dane’s room, and saw him lying on the bed in Frank Dane’s clothes.

‘Bless my soul!’ said James, ‘what an extraordinary likeness! If it wasn’t for the clothes, I could swear this was the Doctor. Poor devil!’ he muttered, ‘what an awful life! He never looks mad, and yet they say he’s as mad as a March

hare. He must be, or he'd never have come round here last night and kicked up this dust.'

Frank Dane was in Dr. Dane's study, smiling to himself over the success of his plot.

A ring at the door, and James Fairton announced that a man wished to see Dr. Dane at once.

'Send him in,' said Frank Dane.

'Are you Dr. Dane?' asked the man, as he entered the room.

'I am,' said Frank Dane. 'What's your trouble? You are up early.'

The man looked at him keenly.

'Yes, I'm up early. There's been an accident: my mate's been run over—at least, they say he's been run over accidentally. I think it's been done on purpose. He's got a heap of enemies in London, has Simeon Hare.'

'Simeon Hare?' said Frank Dane.

He was cunning now. He knew he had to tread warily. The least mistake, and he would be lost again.

'Yes; you know him well, doctor—at least, Simeon says you do, and that he's more faith in you than anyone else,' said the man.

'I have attended him before?' said Frank inquiringly.

'Once, for a bullet-wound,' said the man.

'Ah, yes—I remember,' said Frank. 'Well, what's the matter this time?'

'No bones broken, but Simeon fancies his back's hurt.'

'James,' called Frank Dane, 'I'm going to see Simeon Hare; he's met with an accident. You will attend to—you know who—and see Dr. Simpson at once.'

'Yes, sir,' said James. 'I'm sorry Simeon's met with an accident, doctor; he's the best detective in London.'

Frank Dane glared at James Fairton in a manner that worthy had not been accustomed to from Dr. Dane.

'What do you know about detectives?' asked Frank Dane.

'Not much, sir,' said James; 'but I read the papers, and Simeon Hare generally has a hand in all the big cases.'

Frank Dane made no reply, but left the house with the man who had come for him, and drove away to see Simeon Hare.

CHAPTER II.

DR. DANE.

WHEN James Fairton returned to the house with Dr. Simpson, they found Dr. Dane still insensible.

'All the better,' said Dr. Simpson. 'He might cause trouble. I'm glad I came myself. Poor Frank! I like the fellow. His latest idea is that he is Dr. Dane—in fact, his brother—and the notion will not go out of his head.'

‘They are very much alike,’ said James. ‘I’m certain I could not tell one from the other.’

‘It would be a very difficult matter,’ said Dr. Simpson. ‘All the more reason Frank Dane should be kept under control. It would be a dangerous experiment if the mad brother ever had the chance of passing himself off as the sane doctor.’

‘I don’t think that could happen,’ said James. ‘Frank Dane would quickly be found out.’

‘I’m not so sure of that,’ said Dr. Simpson. ‘A man in Frank Dane’s condition is dangerously clever. You have no idea what sort of dodges such men get up to. Sometimes Frank Dane persuades me he is sane in spite of my knowing he is nothing of the kind.’

Dr. Dane was gently carried downstairs, and placed in Dr. Simpson’s carriage with an attendant and the doctor.

It was not many minutes before the insensible man recovered. He was dazed from the effects of the chloroform, and looked about him in a wild, bewildered way. At first he could see nothing distinctly. Everything round him was unfamiliar, and a peculiar dazzling light appeared to be thrown over all the objects that met his gaze.

Dr. Dane rubbed his eyes, and then tried to speak.

He could not utter a sound. His mouth felt parched and dry, his brain was in a whirl.

He moved uneasily, and tried to stand up, but

was gently pulled back on to the seat. He had not yet recognised Dr. Simpson, who watched him intently.

The carriage drove rapidly along, and in the course of an hour came to a halt in front of a large house standing in the midst of extensive grounds, which were fenced in and shaded by large trees.

Dr. Dane was assisted out of the carriage, and walked into Dr. Simpson's room. He sat down quietly, looked round, and suddenly his senses came back to him. In his first great surprise he acted in such a manner that Dr. Simpson could not possibly doubt it was Frank Dane.

Dr. Dane rose from his seat, and paced hurriedly up and down the room. He stared at his clothes, and he stared at Dr. Simpson. He commenced to think he had suddenly gone mad, or that he was dreaming a horrid dream. Then a recollection of the events of the previous day flashed across his mind. He remembered his meeting with Simeon Hare, and the detective speaking about his double. He also remembered that he went to bed tired out, and that he had been thinking of his brother.

Dr. Dane felt a cold perspiration come over him as the horrible thought struck him that somehow during the night he and his mad brother had changed places.

The sane man was under control, the madman free.

Dr. Dane knew if he were in Dr. Simpson's place it would be difficult to convince him this change had taken place. He felt he must be careful how he acted, and feel his way to safety gradually.

All this time Dr. Simpson remained silent, but watched him closely.

Dr. Dane knew it was part of his brother's strange madness to fancy he was Dr. Dane.

If, therefore, he at once proclaimed to Dr. Simpson that a mistake had been made, and that he was Richard Dane and not Frank Dane, it would tend to confirm Dr. Simpson's belief that no such mistake had arisen.

It was a critical and awful position for Dr. Dane to be in.

His brain had not yet entirely recovered from the overdose of chloroform he had received. At the same time, he thought clearly, but slowly.

Dr. Simpson's first words at once showed him the terrible danger, not only himself, but others were in. The doctor said :

'Do you feel better, Frank? You have had a bad night. I think you had better have a rest. You do not look well.'

Dr. Dane looked Dr. Simpson straight in the face as he replied :

'Yes, Dr. Simpson, I want rest. I want time to think. Some very strange things happened last night. I must have a chat with you in a few hours.'

'When you like, Frank,' said Dr. Simpson kindly. 'But take a rest first. You can remain here if you wish. I will send Mason in to keep you company.'

Dr. Dane nodded, and Dr. Simpson rang the bell.

Mason, the attendant, entered, and received his instructions.

Dr. Dane stretched himself on the couch, and commenced to think.

'How can all this have happened?' he said to himself. Then he commenced to go over all he had done the previous day.

'It must have been Frank that Simeon Hare saw,' he said. 'He has certainly escaped, or I should not be here. What an awful situation I am in! How did I get these clothes on? Frank must have got into the house, concealed himself, then drugged me and changed clothes. He'll take my place, and act as Dr. Dane. Great heavens! what mischief he may do in a short time! I must persuade Dr. Simpson a mistake has been made. Oh, this fatal likeness! Well might Hare say he had seen my double! Frank will have full control over me and all I possess if he can manage to keep up the deception. Then there are Amy's letters from Sydney. He'll open them. He'll know all. He loved her himself before this madness came upon him. What will he do? I dare not think! Suppose I am detained here for weeks. He might go out to Amy instead of me. Good God! what an awful

possibility ! I must not think about such things. If I do I shall go mad. Am I mad ? I have heard of men driving themselves mad by their own thoughts on insanity.'

Dr. Dane sprang from his couch. He could bear the horrible suspense no longer.

Mason was on the alert.

'Is there anything you require, sir ?' he asked quietly.

'I want to see Dr. Simpson at once.'

'Yes, sir,' answered Mason, and touched the bell.

'Mr. Dane wishes to see Dr. Simpson,' he said to the man answering the bell.

Dr. Simpson came immediately.

'Do you feel better, Frank ?' he asked. 'Mason, you can go.'

When the attendant had left the room, Dr. Dane went up to Dr. Simpson and said quietly :

'George, there has been a terrible and awful mistake made here. I am not Frank Dane ; I am Dr. Richard Dane. Surely you know me ?'

For one moment Dr. Simpson doubted. Then he thought :

'It is simply wonderful the power this man has over me to induce me to think him sane !'

'Do you not believe me ?' asked Dr. Dane eagerly.

'Of course I do,' said Dr. Simpson, smiling. 'You are Dr. Dane.'

Dr. Dane saw Dr. Simpson was merely humour-

ing the man he believed to be Frank Dane, his patient.

As the hopelessness of the situation dawned upon him, he sat down in a chair near the table and buried his head in his hands.

Dr. Simpson placed his hand on his shoulder, and said kindly :

‘ You are overtired. What you want is complete rest, *doctor*.’

He emphasized the word ‘ doctor,’ and Dr. Dane looked up quickly. He saw no hope in Dr. Simpson’s face. He had been called ‘ doctor ’ to pacify him, the supposed Frank Dane.

Dr. Dane was in great danger. He had been overworked for months past. What with his medical and Parliamentary duties, he had been burning the candle at both ends, and working day and night. He was a man of somewhat nervous temperament. Last night’s adventures had completely upset him. He felt he was in no fit state to argue his case successfully now.

He could not blame Dr. Simpson, and he knew he would have acted in a similar manner had he been placed in such a situation.

All this did not tend to lessen his anxiety, but to deepen it. He must appeal to Frank. That thought was at once banished. He could expect no assistance there.

A ray of hope : there was Simeon Hare.

Now, Simeon Hare had never seen his brother, therefore he would not be prejudiced by the extra-

ordinary likeness between them. Simeon Hare would at once recognise him as Dr. Dane.

How could he communicate with Simeon Hare? Perhaps Dr. Simpson would let him write a letter to the famous detective.

As these thoughts flashed through Dr. Dane's mind, he considered it would be better for him to retire to his brother's room, which would no doubt be given to him, and think over the matter. He hinted this to Dr. Simpson, and his request was complied with. He heard Dr. Simpson murmur:

'Poor chap! I'm awfully sorry for him; and such a clever fellow, too!'

When Dr. Dane entered the room, he heard the key softly turned in the lock behind him.

He looked at the window. It was a large bright window, with a cheerful outlook, but it was safely barred on the outside.

The room was comfortable. It was evident Dr. Simpson had a special regard for Frank Dane.

Dr. Dane curiously examined the contents of the room. He wondered how Frank had managed to escape. He picked up first one thing and then another. There were books, drawing materials, photographs, and a variety of knick-knacks.

Dr. Dane actually found himself interested in the experiences he was going through. He meant to write a thrilling article for the press when he regained his liberty, and this dreadful mistake had been rectified. When would the mistake be rectified?

That was the serious question Dr. Dane now set himself to resolve.

He argued the whole matter out. He saw how difficult it would be for him to prove his own identity.

His chief hope lay in Frank Dane's actions being noticed, and the consequences that would follow his assumption of his (Dr. Dane's) duties.

This would take time, and there was no telling what harm might be done by the madman.

Simeon Hare would be the man to consult. He must be communicated with at once.

Fate was, however, working hard against Dr. Dane.

At the time he was considering how to enlist the services of Simeon Hare in his favour, his brother, Frank Dane, was personating him at the detective's bedside.

A more complicated and intricate web of unfortunate circumstances had never been woven round a man.

Dr. Dane was in desperate straits, did he but know it. He had only a vague idea of what was to follow this strange prank an unkind fortune was playing him.

Had he been able to look into the future, Dr. Dane would probably have lost his senses in the contemplation of an extraordinary drama of life, in which, being wholly innocent, he was deemed guilty of many outrages upon society.

CHAPTER III.

SIMEON HARE.

FRANK DANE acted his part well. He went straight to Simeon Hare's with the man who came for him. He did not talk much during the journey, making an excuse for his silence by stating he was tired and had gone through a heavy night.

Simeon Hare had been run over during his homeward journey the previous night, but, luckily, he suffered very little harm.

He lay on the couch in his private room, and felt stiff and sore.

He thought it better a doctor should examine him, in case there might be any internal injury.

When Frank Dane entered the room, Simeon Hare greeted him in his usual cheery manner.

'Good-morning, doctor,' he said; 'I hope you saw nothing of your double last night.'

Frank Dane gave a start of surprise, and Simeon Hare thought to himself:

'Strange how that look comes into his eyes! It was there last night when I mentioned what I had seen. They say insanity runs in the family, and that he has a mad brother in an asylum. I'm not surprised. Don't care to see such a look in a man's eyes. It bodes no good.'

'Whose double?' said Frank Dane.

'Have you forgotten?' asked Simeon; 'I told

you last night I had seen a man who would most certainly be taken for yourself by ninety-nine men out of every hundred.'

'I recollect,' said Frank Dane. 'First, let me examine you and see if there are any bones broken.'

Frank Dane had studied for the medical profession before his brain became affected, and therefore Simeon Hare did not perceive anything unusual in his method of examination.

'No bones broken,' said Frank Dane; 'there are no internal injuries. You are a bit stiff and sore. Take a rest.'

'Can't,' said Simeon Hare—'I'm busy; I'm engaged in a jewellery robbery case.'

Frank Dane was staring out of the window.

'What are you looking at?' said Simeon.

Dane started. His mind had been wandering. As he stared at the window, he wondered who had removed the bars on the outside.

'I thought there were bars on the window,' he said absently.

'Bars! nonsense!' said Simeon; 'I don't get behind bars; it's the people I nab find iron curtains on their windows when they wake up.'

'Ah, ah!' laughed Frank Dane. Then, seeing the bull terrier looking at him somewhat ferociously, he said: 'That's a savage dog to have loose about a room, Hare.'

'Why, Dandy was always fond of you,' said Simeon,

‘He’s in a bad humour this morning, then,’ said Frank Dane.

‘Never saw him sulk before,’ said Simeon. ‘Here, lad, it’s Dr. Dane; you know him, Dandy.’

The dog smelt at Frank Dane’s clothes, but looked up at him in a half-frightened sort of way.

Frank stooped and stroked the dog’s head, and Dandy gave a low growl.

‘Down, sir!’ said Simeon. ‘That’s curious. I never knew him make a mistake before.’

‘I had an extraordinary adventure last night,’ said Frank Dane.

He then related to Simeon Hare all that had taken place at his brother’s house.

As he gave an account of the struggle, Simeon Hare noticed the exultation with which he illustrated how he mastered his brother.

‘Is he a dangerous madman?’ asked Simeon.

‘Certainly; but to look at him and hear him speak you would not think he would harm a fly.’

‘Then, are you very much alike?’ asked Simeon.

‘Yes; you would not tell my brother from myself. You evidently saw him last night.’

‘I must have done so. The resemblance struck me as most extraordinary. Now I come to think of it, your brother had different clothes on to those you are wearing,’ said Simeon.

‘He had. When he was taken away this morning he had a dark tweed suit on.’

‘Same man,’ said Simeon; ‘I saw him last night

sure enough. What could he be prowling round there for ?'

'Watching me home,' said Frank Dane, and he gave a cunning chuckle as he thought how easily he was fooling this clever detective. Frank Dane at this moment was sane, with this reservation—he honestly believed in his diseased mind he was Dr. Dane.

'What the deuce is he laughing at!' thought Simeon.

'My brother is in Dr. Simpson's asylum,' said Frank Dane.

'He could not be in safer hands,' said Simeon.

'No; it's not an easy job to get out of there,' said Frank.

'Your brother managed it,' said Simeon.

'He's very cunning,' said Frank Dane.

'I've known lunatics act with a dashed sight more sense than sane men,' said Simeon.

This tickled Frank Dane immensely, and he laughed.

'Confound the man! what's up with him?' thought Simeon. 'What a beastly laugh that is! I never noticed it before.'

'Curious thing, insanity,' said Frank Dane; 'I have made a special study of it. I watched it gradually cloud my brother's brain. I watched it creep into him, and steal away his senses. I felt all he felt. He is a twin brother, and you know what strange affinity there is between men so born. I felt the awful struggle he had on that

precipice between sanity and insanity—sanity on top, insanity in the darkness below. Fancy a man gradually going mad, and knowing it all the time! I could feel him wrestling with the monster. God, man! it was worse than hell!’

Frank Dane uttered the last words in such a tone of conviction that Simeon Hare shuddered. The symptoms Frank Dane described he had experienced himself. He lived in a perfect Hades of awful fancies. He was a madman who knew his failing, but tried to bring in a verdict of sanity in favour of himself.

‘You have agitated yourself, doctor,’ said Simeon. ‘I have often heard of twins having a wonderful affinity towards each other; but I never thought it went as far as that.’

‘It does—I tell you it does,’ said Frank Dane. ‘Why, even now, my poor unfortunate brother fancies he is Dr. Dane.’

‘I can understand that,’ said Simeon; ‘that’s another proof of the affinity between you.’

‘Let us change the subject,’ said Frank Dane. ‘You are in no danger, Hare. I have been here too long. If you want me again, send for me.’

‘I will; thank you for calling,’ said Simeon. ‘Must you go now? I should like to have another chat with you, doctor, on this insanity question. It interests me. We see a lot of it feigned in our line; but I’m hanged if I don’t think a genuine madman can act sane better than a sane man can sham madness!’

'My opinion entirely,' said Frank Dane. 'It would confirm you in that opinion if you saw my brother.'

'Be sure and call again, doctor,' said Simeon. 'Your conversation gives me a heap of ideas.'

'You are full of ideas, Hare,' said Frank Dane. 'Good-morning.' He held out his hand, and Simeon took it in his own.

For one moment the two men looked at each other; then Frank Dane walked out of the room.

No sooner had he shut the door than Dandy made a dash at it and growled. It was a doggy demonstration of disapproval of Frank Dane.

'Come here, hang you!' said Simeon. 'What's up with the dog? He was very fond of the doctor. Curious fellow, though! Has a slight touch of his brother's malady, I should say. "God, man! it is worse than hell!" How he said those words! He must have felt something of such a struggle himself.'

Frank Dane went back to Dr. Dane's house.

'Letters,' he said, as he picked a pile off the table. 'I shall have some rare fun! I fancy some of my brother's patients would be alarmed if they knew all. But I am Dr. Dane, and I am a cleverer man than Dick—I've heard him say so himself. I have always been Dr. Dane. These are all my patients. During my absence Dick has been attending to them. Very good of him! I'll do it myself now. Well, James, what is it?'

'What time do you require the carriage, sir?'

‘The usual hour.’

‘Very well, sir.’

Frank Dane opened the letters with evident relish. It was a long time since he had been so occupied.

‘Cheque for ten guineas,’ he said. ‘I must see how I can write my name.’

He took up a letter with Dr. Dane’s signature on.

Then in a rapid manner he wrote ‘Richard Dane.’

The two signatures were exact.

Everything his brother had done seemed to come natural to this strange man, a wonderful mixture of sanity and insanity.

He got out a cheque-book, filled in a cheque for ten pounds ten shillings, signed it Richard Dane, and then rang the bell.

‘James, cash that.’

‘Yes, sir.’

In half an hour James came in again, and put ten sovereigns and a half-sovereign on the table.

‘Thank you,’ said Frank Dane.

He chinked the money in his hand.

‘I am Richard Dane—Dr. Dane. The bank says so ; James says so ; the cleverest detective in London says so ; Dr. Simpson——’

He rang the bell again.

‘James, did my brother go quietly?’

‘Yes, sir. They carried him into the carriage. He was insensible.’

'Poor fellow! Better so, James—better so. Never drink, James.'

'I never do, sir,' said James, highly indignant.

'I did not say you did,' said Frank Dane. 'I said, "Never drink, James."'

James left the room bewildered.

'It must run in the family,' was his only comment. 'What a case it will be if the doctor goes mad!'

Frank Dane did not consider he had made any unusual remark. The correspondence was lengthy, and occupied him some time. He was neglecting patients, but he heeded it not; he never thought of them.

One man died while Frank Dane was opening Dr. Dane's letters. It may as well be stated here that Frank Dane called to see this patient later on in the day. Dr. Dane's reputation was not enhanced in that neighbourhood by his neglect. Another medical man had been called in, as it was too far to send for Dr. Dane. The medical man had never met Dr. Dane before. He put him down as a most eccentric man.

Frank Dane took up a large envelope. It had a New South Wales stamp on.

Frank handled it curiously.

'Must be a photo inside,' he said. 'Who can my dear brother know in that far-off land? Bah! no cheque in that. It will keep.'

He finished opening the other letters.

He took Dr. Dane's memorandum-book, and

made several entries. The handwriting was so similar, an ordinary glance at it would not have given any hint that two different men had made the entries.

‘I may as well see what’s in this letter from New South Wales.’

He took up the envelope again, and fingered it curiously. He seemed to have a strange dread of opening it. He held it up to the light, but could see nothing.

‘A cabinet photo of someone,’ he said.

Slowly he tore open the envelope and drew out the photograph. It was covered in plain paper, and there was a letter inside the envelope. Frank Dane caught sight of the writing, and a sudden trembling seized him.

Some hidden memory in a dark recess of his diseased brain was roused by the writing. With trembling hands he undid the paper round the photograph. The back of the cabinet was towards him as the paper fell on to the floor. He turned it over.

It was a photograph of a handsome woman with eloquent, pleading eyes, and they seemed to gaze straight into those of Frank Dane, and read him through and through. For one moment Frank Dane looked at the woman in the photograph he held stretched out before him. Then, with a wild cry, he hurled it from him and fell in a dead faint on the floor.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PHOTOGRAPH.

JAMES FAIRTON heard Frank Dane's cry, and then the sound of a heavy fall. He rushed into the doctor's room, and saw Frank Dane stretched out insensible on the floor. He poured some brandy into a glass, and, holding up the insensible man's head, forced a small quantity into his mouth, which he swallowed with difficulty.

When Frank Dane recovered, he looked round in a vacant sort of way.

'What's the matter?' he asked. 'Why are you holding me down? Let me get up; I'm not a dangerous man.'

'I found you insensible on the floor, doctor,' said James. 'I heard you cry out, and rushed into the room. I hope you are better.'

Frank Dane staggered to his feet, and then sank into a chair.

'Weakness, James,' he said. 'Last night's struggle has quite upset me. I have not got over it yet.'

'I don't wonder at it,' said James. 'It must have been an awful tussle.'

'Leave me now. I shall soon be all right,' said Frank Dane. 'Later on I will go my round.'

Frank Dane was no sooner alone than he rose from his chair and picked up the photograph he

had hurled across the room. He sat down again and looked earnestly at the picture. His face was a study. It expressed the thoughts within.

At first there was a look of love in his eyes, a yearning for the woman whose likeness he saw before him. Then the expression changed to doubt and uncertainty. His eyes became harder, his mouth set firm, and his hand clenched the picture hard.

In another moment his face underwent a complete change. The love and doubt had turned into hate and fury.

Frank Dane gnashed his teeth and foamed at the mouth. His eyes blazed with the fierce light of madness, intensified by hatred. He glared at the picture as though he would like to tear its living embodiment limb from limb. He took the photograph in both hands and tore it into a score of pieces.

He cast them on the floor and stamped furiously on them. The face looked up from the scattered fragments. He had missed destroying it, and he ground it under his heel.

'Curse you! curse you!' he raved. 'I am mad, am I? Your false face helped to drive me mad. You encouraged me, and all the time it was Dick who was your lover. I wish I had you here, you false jade! I would strangle you—strangle you! Do you hear me?'

He clenched his fists and bit his lip until the blood flowed.

'I'll read your letter. Let me read what you can write to Dick—to Dr. Dane. Ah! ah! ah!'

He took the letter and commenced to read. The contents interested him. It was a loving letter written by a good woman.

There was no sentimental nonsense in it, but honest, whole-hearted love for the man she addressed breathed out of every sentence.

'DEAR RICHARD,' read Frank Dane with a cruel smile on his handsome face, which at this particular moment was not so fatally like his brother's.

'You say you are undecided whether to sell your practice and come out to me, or whether it would be better for me to come to you. This I leave entirely with you. There is ample scope in Sydney for a medical man of your stamp and wide experience. True, there are many doctors here, but I feel certain a man of your recognised abilities would make a name for himself in a very short time. You would like Sydney. It is a charming city, not at all new and colonial, but genuinely old-fashioned English. The people are warm-hearted and generous, somewhat slow to form new friendships; but once they take a liking to anyone, it is not merely skin-deep affection. You name our marriage. I love you truly, Richard, and therefore I am not unwomanly, I hope, if I say I shall welcome the time when I can call myself your wife.'

Frank Dane read on. It was a long letter, and it explained much to him. From it he gathered the exact feelings entertained by the writer for Richard Dane. He also learned much of what had passed between them in former communications.

‘The photograph I send you is a recent one. I hope you will like it; my friends say it is excellent. I will not say I think it flatters me, because a true likeness does not do that. It is five years since I left England. How the time flies! I long to see you again and chat with you over many matters: your profession, which I admire, your hopes and your disappointments, your victories and your defeats. I want to help you to bear defeat, Richard, and to triumph with you in your victories.

‘How is poor Frank? Do you know, Richard, I have sometimes blamed myself for being too kind towards him. I think we were unwise to treat him so merely to humour him. He once told me he loved me. You said it was merely a madman’s dream, a passing fancy. It may have been, Richard, that he did really love me as much as his poor diseased mind would allow him. I pity him from the bottom of my heart. If you decide to come out, I am sure you will see Frank is well provided for and kindly treated.

‘Dr. Simpson is a humane man. He is a man I respect, for he is doing a noble work among those poor unfortunate men he cares for so tenderly.’

The letter concluded by asking Dr. Dane to write as early as possible, and let her know his intentions. It was signed 'AMY MONTROSE.'

'Pity me, do you?' hissed Frank Dane. 'Then you can save your pity for my brother. "Merely a madman's dream!" No, Dick, it was not a madman's dream, although it may have been a madman's love. Now, Amy Montrose, it is a madman's hate.

'What a glorious revenge! No sane man, it will be said, could ever have plotted such a fiendish, hideous revenge.

'I am Dr. Dane. I am Richard Dane. Frank Dane is buried in Dr. Simpson's asylum. I am your lover, Amy, and I am going to give up my practice and join you in Sydney.

'Five years since we met, Amy. Even love will not penetrate through this fatal likeness. I am Dr. Dane, and you will know I am Richard Dane. We can discuss poor Frank together.'

Frank Dane gave a hoarse laugh, and his eyes danced with the mad thoughts in his disordered brain glowing in them.

'Welcome the time when you shall call yourself my wife!' he went on. 'I will hasten that time. I will marry you, Amy, and we will live happily together. Oh, so happily! Then comes my revenge. You shall learn the truth when it is too late. You shall learn what it is to be a madman's bride, to bear a madman's children. And you will not be able to injure me. You will not be able to

shake off the yoke. You will know the truth, but none will believe you. I shall be Dr. Dane. If you give me much trouble, Amy, I shall have to obtain the necessary certificates and prove your insanity. It would be a brilliant idea to consign you to our good friend Dr. Simpson. You would meet poor "Frank" there.

'Two sane people consigned to durance vile by a madman. I love plots. I love law. I love to study insanity. I have made it a speciality, Amy. I can't help studying it. I am studying myself. It is interesting. I wish I could dissect myself, or, at all events, examine my own brain. I might possibly be able to separate the sound from the unsound. You shall help me to write a medical treatise on insanity, Amy, based on a minute examination of poor Frank's brain. We'll pull poor Frank's brain all to pieces, and dish it up for the delectation of the public in chapters. It will be an interesting work, Amy. You will become so absorbed in it that I am afraid it will turn you mad. Then, when you are quite mad, you can write a book on insanity yourself, and tell the public all the funny things you heard, and how they turned your brain.'

Frank Dane worked himself up to such a pitch of excitement that he could no longer rest. He went out of the house and entered the carriage. He made several professional calls. They did not increase the confidence felt in Dr. Dane. Some of his patients even went so far as to say they

were afraid Dr. Dane was 'going' like his poor brother.

Frank Dane cared not. He rather enjoyed damaging his brother's hard-won reputation.

'I'll sell the practice,' he said to himself.

He drew out an elaborate announcement and sent it for insertion in the leading London and provincial papers and the medical journals. Then he set to work to gain a thorough knowledge of his brother's affairs. He told James Fairton what he intended doing, and asked the man if he would accompany him to Sydney.

'It's rather sudden, doctor,' said James; 'but I'd like to go out with you. You see, I've been here five years.'

'Do you know——'

He was going to ask James Fairton if he knew Amy Montrose, but pulled up just in time.

'Know what, sir?'

'The time,' said Frank Dane. 'My watch has stopped.'

'The clock's going, sir,' said James, in some surprise.

'So it is, James. I did not notice it. Then, you will go with me, James? I can rely upon you?'

'You can, sir. When do you sail?'

'As soon as I can arrange to dispose of the practice and settle my affairs,' said Frank Dane.

He consulted Dr. Dane's lawyer, whose name and address he discovered among the papers. The man of law thought Dr. Dane had suddenly

developed a remarkable aptitude for reckoning how many beans make five. His client hitherto had let him handle his affairs in a jog-trot style eminently suitable to the old lawyer's years. Frank Dane woke him up. When he left, the old lawyer felt as though he had received a powerful electric shock.

'Settle everything in a fortnight. He's mad. He'll go insane, like his brother, sure as fate. A fortnight! Bah! it can't be done.'

But it had to be done, as the lawyer discovered; and when he found Dane was determined, he did his level best to oblige him. Frank Dane was in luck's way. He soon found a purchaser for such an extensive practice as Dr. Dane's, and a stiff sum was paid in cash for it.

When he had settled everything connected with the practice, Frank Dane commenced to collect all his brother's papers together.

There were letters from Amy Montrose, which he tied in a bundle and put aside to read at his leisure. He came across one Dr. Dane had commenced to Amy, and the thought struck him he might finish it. The letter commenced in an ordinary way, and bore a recent date. He put it in his pocket, and decided to end it as he thought fit. He cabled to Amy Montrose that he would leave by the *Orizaba*, and added 'Letter following.'

Frank Dane was perfectly satisfied with all he had done. He was so sure of his position that

he determined to pay a visit to Dr. Simpson, and see how his brother was bearing his captivity.

It was an act of fiendish cruelty no man but a madman would have been capable of, or dared to face the peril incurred.

'I'll see him,' grinned Frank. 'I shall see Simpson first. Good old doctor! he'll grant me a private interview with "poor Frank." Then I will tell my dear brother, who has robbed me of love, and hope, and life, and brain, what I am going to do. If that does not turn his brain, I'm no judge of lunatics—and I ought to be. I'll torture him; he'll try and strangle me. So much the better. There will be no doubt about the dangerous nature of his malady then. Simpson shall be well paid; I'll see to that. It is to my interest to do so. That's Simpson's failing; he's a kind old man, but he loves money. It will be a pleasant meeting, Dick!' chuckled Frank Dane.

Thus did the madman argue and plot to consign Dr. Dane to worse than a life-long imprisonment.

CHAPTER V.

THE BROTHERS.

'I WAS expecting to see you, Dr. Dane,' said Dr. Simpson to Frank Dane, his escaped patient.

'How is poor Frank?' asked Frank Dane.

'I am sorry to say he is worse, much worse,'

said Dr. Simpson. 'Since his escape and recapture, he is more determined than ever that he is Dr. Dane. By the way, he happened to see a notice in the paper about the practice being for sale. Ever since then I have had him carefully watched. He raves terribly, and says you are swindling him; he calls me an idiot, and, in fact, he is becoming violent.'

'This is terrible,' said Frank Dane. 'I have sold my practice, Dr. Simpson, and leave for Australia by the *Orizaba*. I wish to make all the necessary arrangements for my brother's detention here. When I am away, you will see there is more necessity to keep a strict watch over him. If he is likely to cause more trouble, I am willing to allow another hundred a year for him.'

'You are too generous, Dr. Dane,' said Dr. Simpson.

'Not at all,' said Frank Dane; 'I wish my brother to be cared for in every possible way.'

'You may rest assured that shall be done,' replied Dr. Simpson.

'I should like to have a private interview with him before I leave,' said Frank Dane.

Dr. Simpson shook his head.

'In his present state I am afraid it would be dangerous,' he replied; 'he has the bitterest feeling towards you. He flies into a passion at the mere mention of your name.'

'I'll risk it,' said Frank; 'I'm strong, doctor.'

You can have an attendant within call, and be handy yourself.'

'As you please,' said Dr. Simpson.

'Where is he?' asked Frank.

'In his own room.'

'Do not announce me; let me take him by surprise. The shock will unnerve him.'

'Do you know what you are risking?' asked Dr. Simpson.

'Yes.'

'Your life,' said Dr. Simpson. 'He will fly at your throat the moment you enter the room.'

'I can quiet him with a few words,' said Frank.

'How?'

'Come, and you shall see,' replied Frank.

Dr. Simpson led the way along the corridor, and Frank Dane could have given a wild mad yell of joy as he thought how often he had traversed this same corridor a prisoner, and now he was a free man. He had the greatest difficulty in mastering the mad demon surging within him, but he did it. There was a struggle, but his sanity beat his insanity.

'Be careful,' said Dr. Simpson, as he opened the door.

Another moment and the brothers were face to face.

Dr. Dane had altered since that terrible night when his brother changed places with him. The strain had told upon him; he looked wild and

haggard. Of the two, the sane man looked the more insane.

When Dr. Dane saw his brother, he gave a spring forward. Then he stopped dead. The thought struck him that Frank had schemed for this moment, and that if he showed violence it would tell against him. Dr. Dane sat down, and said as calmly as his agitation would permit him :

‘You can leave us, Simpson.’

Dr. Simpson glanced at Frank Dane, who gave a motion of assent. In that glance Dr. Dane saw his brother had completely deceived Dr. Simpson. It was another blow, but he nerved himself to bear it.

When the brothers were alone, Frank Dane strode over to Richard Dane, and grasped him by the wrist. The mask was off now. Frank Dane looked the mad, cruel man he was. Dr. Dane stepped back alarmed.

‘You have come to release me, Frank,’ he said ; ‘you have already done me a terrible wrong. I will forgive you all if you will speak the truth, and own you are Frank Dane.’

‘Sorry to see you looking worse,’ said Frank. ‘Dr. Simpson tells me you still fancy you are Dr. Dane.’

How could Richard Dane argue with this mad-man? He was at his wits’ end ; he had some idea how a diseased brain can demoralize a man and make him scarcely human. Even in his dire peril and extremity he pitied Frank Dane ; he knew

his brother was hopelessly insane, and he found courage to pity him.

'Frank, you do not know what you are doing,' said Richard Dane. 'I am sorry for you—very sorry for you. You must be perfectly aware I cannot permit you to leave here again. Come, sit down, and let us have a chat.'

'That is what I have come for,' said Frank Dane. 'Listen to me. You are my brother. For ever and ever, from this day onwards, I am Dr. Dane, you are Frank Dane. Mad! I know I'm mad. My dear Dick, I acknowledge you are Dick; but I am Dr. Dane, and I always have been Dr. Dane, and you know it. You have had your turn, Dick; now I am going to have mine. Listen to me, you robber!' he hissed.

Richard Dane started; his brother's face was fearful to look upon.

'Robber!' he could not help exclaiming. 'What do you mean?'

'Patience, patience! I have a story to tell. You'll like it, Dick; I'm sure you'll like it.'

He laughed savagely. The madness was on him now, but he knew his story well.

'I have sold the practice, Dick. I have wound up all the affairs. I am going out to Australia,' he said in a terrible whisper, the last word hissing out of his mouth, and bringing Richard Dane to his feet with a bound. 'Ah, I thought that would fetch you!' grinned Frank. 'I have received a letter from Amy. She is anxious for me—for *me*—

for *me*—Dr. Richard Dane—to go out and marry her. And I'm going. Do you hear, you robber? do you hear?’

Richard Dane heard the awful news, and his brain reeled. The blow was so terrible he staggered under it.

Amy Montrose, his promised wife—she was to be made the victim of this raving madman—this madman who was more cunning and dangerous than any sane man!

The horror of the situation appalled him. He shook with fear; he trembled in every limb; he felt he should go mad himself.

‘You took her from me,’ said Frank savagely. ‘I loved her. Now I hate her. Do you hear, hate her? I am mad. She is going to be a madman’s bride. You are a doctor, are you? Then you know what her children are likely to be.’

The horrible, fearful words were uttered in such a tone of fiendish exultation that Richard Dane’s control gave way.

With a wild cry, he flew at Frank Dane’s throat. He gripped him like a vice.

‘You fiend!’ he shouted in his agony and rage. ‘I will kill you! You are my brother, but I will kill you, to save her from such an awful fate!’

Richard Dane’s cry had been heard.

The attendant and Dr. Simpson rushed into the room; they saw a terrible sight. Richard Dane and his brother were engaged in a deadly struggle.

Frank Dane's mad blood was up. His face was distorted, and he was nearly choked with the vice-like grip in which his brother held him. He fought for his life, and Richard Dane fought to kill.

Dr. Simpson, as he looked at the brothers gripped in this deadly struggle, thought Frank Dane, whom he accepted as Richard Dane, was the madder of the two.

Dr. Simpson was right, but he did not know it.

The attendant seized Richard Dane in his powerful arms and dragged him off his brother.

Exhausted with the struggle, and overwhelmed with the fearful news he had heard, Richard Dane became insensible.

Dr. Simpson pushed Frank Dane out of the room. Had he not done so, in another moment Frank would have rushed upon his insensible brother and acted in such a manner as to convince Dr. Simpson there was something wrong.

'I told you what would happen,' said Dr. Simpson.

Frank Dane did not reply ; he dared not. He was struggling for mastery over his madness. It was a far more terrible struggle than the one he had just been engaged in.

'Have a glass of something,' said Dr. Simpson. 'You must have had a terrible shock.'

Frank Dane took some brandy and drank it eagerly. It nerved him, he said.

'Poor beggar ! He nearly did for me. He will want looking after, Simpson.'

‘He will be well taken care of, and kept under guard,’ said Dr. Simpson.

He had not forgotten the look he had seen on Frank Dane’s face during the struggle. He feared Dr. Dane was inclining towards insanity.

‘I suppose you could hardly tell which was the madman,’ said Frank, ‘when you saw us struggling?’

‘Excuse me saying so, Dr. Dane, but if it had not been for your clothes I should have thought you were Frank Dane,’ said Dr. Simpson.

‘Thanks,’ said Frank.

‘No offence, doctor, but the likeness is so extraordinary,’ said Dr. Simpson.

‘You will not see me again before I leave,’ said Frank Dane.

‘Oh, by the way, your brother is very anxious to see a man called Simeon Hare, a detective, I believe. There can be no objections to it, I suppose?’ said Dr. Simpson.

Frank Dane hesitated ; then he said :

‘If you think it will give him any pleasure, of course let him see Simeon Hare. Strange to say, I attended him a short time back ; he was run over, but not seriously injured.’

‘That’s curious,’ said Dr. Simpson. ‘Your brother labours under the delusion that he has attended Simeon Hare on more than one occasion.’

‘Then let him see Simeon Hare,’ said Frank.

'You can explain to him before he sees my brother what his delusions are.'

'I will,' said Dr. Simpson. 'I am sorry I shall not see you again.'

'And I am not,' thought Frank Dane to himself.

At this moment a piercing shriek rang out clear and shrill.

'That's your brother,' said Dr. Simpson; 'I must go to him.'

Richard Dane was battering furiously at the door of his prison. He was mad with agonized thoughts. He must save Amy from his brother's fearful plot.

Frank Dane heard the furious shouts and sounds. It made his blood boil madly through his veins. He dared not stay longer, or the madness would be upon him again.

He bade a hasty good-bye to Dr. Simpson, and left the house. All the way to his brother's house those shouts were ringing in his ears.

Dr. Simpson had a difficult task to soothe Richard Dane. He finally got him quiet by promising to send for Simeon Hare. He intended to send for Simeon Hare, and did so next day, but it was too late.

Simeon Hare was in Scotland on important business. When he returned, the *Orisaba* had sailed for Sydney, and was in the Indian Ocean with Frank Dane and James Fairton on board.

Simeon Hare received Dr. Simpson's note on his

return to Scotland Yard. He read it, and at once took a hansom and drove to the asylum. Dandy sprang in after him, and Simeon did not stop to put him out.

Dandy was destined to be of considerable service to the unfortunate Dr. Dane.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT DANDY DID.

‘MY name is Simeon Hare. I have come to see Frank Dane, as requested in your letter,’ said the detective to Dr. Simpson.

‘Glad to see you, I am sure,’ said Dr. Simpson. ‘I am sorry you could not come before. Poor Dane will not believe I sent for you, and he has been worse than ever in consequence. I do not think there is any danger in your seeing him, as he is evidently anxious for you.’

‘There are very few men I am afraid of,’ said Simeon—‘no sane men. I must confess I have a wholesome dread of madmen—they are so very cunning.’

‘I agree with you,’ said Dr. Simpson. ‘Perhaps I had better explain to you that Frank Dane labours under the delusion he is Dr. Dane, and that he attended you during an illness.’

‘Dr. Dane has attended me on more than one occasion,’ said Simeon Hare—‘the last time was when I met with an accident a few weeks ago.’

‘So he informed me when he came to see his brother before he sailed for Sydney.’

‘Has Dr. Dane given up his practice?’ said Simeon in some surprise.

‘He has. I believe he has sold everything here, and intends to remain in the colonies.’

‘He has left Frank Dane in your charge, then, for an indefinite period?’ said Simeon.

‘I shall take every care of him,’ said Dr. Simpson; ‘I can assure you I am heartily sorry for the poor fellow.’

‘I have not much time to spare,’ said Simeon. ‘Perhaps I had better see him at once.’

‘I will let him know you are here,’ said Dr. Simpson. ‘He is most anxious to see you,’ he said, when he returned. ‘He will pretend he knows you well, I have no doubt. The likeness to Dr. Dane is most extraordinary.’

Simeon Hare went with Dr. Simpson, Dandy following close at his heels.

‘I will leave you with him,’ whispered the doctor when they reached the door; ‘the sight of me seems to irritate him,’ he added, with a sigh of regret.

Simeon Hare opened the door and went in. Dandy was behind Dr. Simpson, and had not time to slip in before it was closed. The terrier lay down on the mat and waited.

‘Simeon Hare,’ said Dr. Dane in great agitation; ‘thank God you have come at last!’

The detective stood looking at Dr. Dane in blank amazement.

‘The doctor’s double, sure enough,’ he thought.
‘What a marvellous resemblance!’

Dr. Dane knew he would have to be very careful; the detective had, no doubt, heard his peculiarities fully explained by Dr. Simpson.

‘I am sorry I could not come before,’ said Simeon; ‘but I have been busy, and away in Scotland.’

‘So Dr. Simpson said, but I fancied he had not sent for you,’ said Dr. Dane. ‘Simeon Hare, don’t you know me? Surely you are not like the others. I am Richard Dane.’

The detective thought a few moments; then he said:

‘If you are Richard Dane, how did you come here? and where is Frank Dane?’

‘Listen to me, Simeon Hare. I have a terrible story to tell you.’ Dr. Dane proceeded to give the detective a full account, as far as he was aware, of all that had occurred. ‘You must recollect meeting me, Hare, when I came out of the House that night. You said you had seen my double. That was my brother Frank; he escaped from here, as Dr. Simpson will tell you. I am Dr. Dane, and he has usurped my place. The consequences will be terrible. My brother has gone to Australia. He came here and told me his plans.’ Dr. Dane shuddered at the thought of what Frank Dane had said. ‘He is gone out to Sydney with the expressed intention of marrying my intended wife in order to be revenged upon her for

what he calls her deception. The situation is horrible.'

Simeon Hare sat dumfounded. He had, in all his strange experiences, never come across such a peculiar case. If this man before him was Frank Dane, he was the most subtle, cunning madman he had ever seen.

The story Dr. Dane told him, however, seemed well-nigh incredible. How could Frank Dane possibly have deceived so many people? Surely some trait of his madness would have shown itself. No, he could not believe this man was Dr. Dane, and yet how wonderfully like him, and how rationally he talked !

'Take your time, Hare ; think it out,' said Dr. Dane. 'It is the most extraordinary case you have ever been engaged in.'

The words were spoken quietly, and Simeon Hare was more and more perplexed.

'If this man is Dr. Dane,' he thought, 'it must have been Frank Dane who attended me after the accident. No ; the thing's impossible.'

The detective was looking at the window. A sudden thought struck him ; it was a clue—a clue in favour of the real Dr. Dane.

He recollected the doctor had said, when questioned, that there were no bars to the window of his (Hare's) room. He had thought it a strange remark at the time ; it had a great significance now.

'Hang me ! if I'm not commencing to think this

is Dr. Dane ! That remark about the bars would be a likely one for Frank Dane to make when taken off his guard. There's Dandy. By Jove ! I've got it. Dandy didn't know the doctor the last time he came to see me ; he growled at him. Dandy's more sense than I have. I'll call him in to give evidence.'

'Well,' said Dr. Dane, 'do you believe me, Simeon ? It is asking you a lot, I know, but it is a matter of life and death to me.'

'One moment,' said Simeon ; 'I am going to call a witness.'

He went to the door and opened it.

Dr. Simpson heard him, and asked if he required anything.

'No, thanks, doctor,' he said. 'I am merely letting the dog in ; I've just missed him.'

Dandy came into the room. When the terrier saw Dr. Dane, he commenced to wag his tail, jump up to him, and give vent to sundry expressions of delight.

'You know me, at all events, Dandy,' said Dr. Dane.

The detective took Dr. Dane's hand and wrung it hard.

'I'm satisfied,' he said. 'But what an awful mistake ! Good God, doctor, I wonder you have not gone mad !'

'You may well say that,' remarked Dr. Dane. 'I have suffered terribly. Am I much altered ?'

'Yes. You look more like your brother than ever now,' said Simeon.

'How do you know? Where did you see Frank?'

'He attended me when I met with an accident,' said the detective. 'He deceived me, but he could not deceive Dandy. The dog would have nothing to do with him. He growled at him, and flew at the door when he went out. I thought it strange at the time—I know the reason now. Then, your brother made a remark about my window having no bars. I thought of that a minute or two back, when I looked out of this window.'

'You must get me out of this at once,' said Dr. Dane. 'I must follow my brother to Sydney; I must be in time to prevent him doing irreparable mischief.'

Simeon Hare looked serious.

'It will be a difficult matter for me to get you out,' he said.

Dr. Dane jumped up suddenly.

'Do you mean to tell me I can't leave this place at once with you?' he asked.

'You know as well as I do, Dr. Dane, that I have no power to take you away from Dr. Simpson's asylum. The difficulty of proving you are Richard Dane, and not Frank Dane, will be enormous. I must tell you candidly, doctor, it is the most difficult case I ever handled. Dr. Simpson will merely think you have deceived me, and led me to believe you are Dr. Dane.'

Have you told Dr. Simpson all you have told me?’

‘Yes,’ said Dr. Dane. ‘He thinks it a madman’s story, concocted for the occasion.’

‘And you can’t blame him,’ said Simeon. ‘It is a madman’s story.’

‘What do you mean by that?’ asked Dr. Dane anxiously.

‘Now, don’t be alarmed, doctor,’ said Simeon. ‘I am not going back on you. I *know* you are Richard Dane—but how to prove it bothers me. When I said it was a madman’s story, I meant that no one but a madman could have done such a thing. It is a madman’s story told by a sane man.’

‘I see what you mean,’ said Dr. Dane. ‘At any rate, you must warn Amy Montrose. You must cable to her at once and let her know Frank has escaped, has taken my place, and is on his way out to Sydney. Tell her not to be afraid of him, but to watch him closely.’

‘I can do that for you,’ said Simeon Hare. ‘I will do it at once when I leave here.’

‘I have no money about me,’ said Dr. Dane. ‘I am afraid, Simeon, I have no money at all. Frank has taken everything. He has deceived everyone. He has left me penniless.’

‘Don’t worry yourself, Dr. Dane,’ said Simeon. ‘If money is wanted in this affair—as it is sure to be, and a lot of it—I can get it for you.’

‘And when matters are put right, you may be quite sure I shall not forget you, Simeon,’ said Dr.

Dane. 'When do you think you can get me away from here?' he added.

'I don't know. Legally I can't get you out until I produce Frank Dane, and prove him to be an impostor, or, more correctly, prove him to be himself. Our best way will be to get at Dr. Simpson. I'll have a try at him. He knows my name stands high in the force. He may not believe you are Dr. Dane, but I may be able to induce him to put you under my special care for a time.'

'He'll never do that,' said Dr. Dane. 'His belief in my absolute insanity grows stronger every day. Frank Dane's certificate of insanity was signed by two of the cleverest men in London. That will be difficult to get over.'

'Leave the whole thing to me,' said Simeon. 'I will have a chat with Dr. Simpson before I leave; I shall be better able to judge what course to take after that. I will send the cablegram if you will give me Miss Montrose's address.'

Dr. Dane wrote on a piece of paper: 'Amy Montrose, Park House, Double Bay, Sydney.'

'That is it, Simeon. Think of the fearful peril she is in. Man! it almost drives me mad to think I am caged here and cannot go out to warn her—to help her!'

'You must keep calm, doctor, and not brood over it,' said Simeon Hare. 'All depends now upon your keeping your brain clear; and, above all, be quiet and sociable with Simpson.'

'How can I keep quiet? I tell you it's madden-

ing, Simeon. I feel inclined to strangle Simpson at times, but I know he cannot be blamed. Suppose you are unable to obtain my liberty.'

'I shall do my best,' said Simeon. 'You may depend upon that.'

Dr. Dane took the detective by the arm.

'Simeon,' he said earnestly, 'could not I escape from here?'

The detective remained thoughtful for some moments.

'That would be dangerous,' he said. 'Defeat would place you in a far worse position than before. Your recapture would be a terrible blow—a fatal blow. Escape must be the last chance : I must try all other means first. If I fail, then, Dr. Dane, sooner than see you buried alive in this madman's place, I will help you to escape, even if it costs me my post.'

Dr. Dane wrung the detective's hand hard.

'You are indeed a true friend, Simeon,' he said. 'Thank God I have such a man on my side!'

Simeon Hare remained with Dr. Dane a few minutes longer. When he left the room he had a chat with Dr. Simpson.

'How did you find him?' asked Dr. Simpson.

Simeon Hare knew there must be no beating about the bush. He must acknowledge his belief in Dr. Dane from the first.

'Dr. Simpson,' he said, 'a terrible mistake has been made. That man is Dr. Richard Dane. I could swear to him. He is as sane as either you or I.'

Dr. Simpson smiled.

'You see what I have to contend with,' he said, 'when he can deceive you.'

'I am not deceived,' said Simeon. 'If it was the last time I had to speak, I would swear that man is Dr. Dane. I *know* he is Dr. Dane.'

Even Dr. Simpson was impressed by the detective's earnestness, but it did not shake his convictions.

'You see what an extraordinary resemblance there is between them,' he said.

'I have only seen Frank Dane twice. The first time was the night he escaped from here. I thought he was Dr. Dane at the time, but found out an hour or so afterwards I was mistaken.'

He then gave Dr. Simpson a minute account of the incident at Westminster, and how he had seen Dr. Dane's double.

'The second time was when he attended me after my accident, and personated his brother.'

He left the doctor to think over all he had said, and went to send a cablegram to Amy Montrose.

CHAPTER VII.

A NIGHT AT COLOMBO.

AT Colombo the *Orizaba* remained several hours on her voyage to Sydney. Frank Dane went ashore for the night, and stayed at the Bristol

Hotel. He did not take James Fairton with him, much to the worthy man's disappointment.

The sights and sounds at Colombo were new to Frank Dane. He revelled in the scene, and the picturesque costumes of the natives attracted him. He went into the Bristol, ordered a room for the night, and then proceeded to pass away the time by lounging in a comfortable chair in one of the long corridors. This corridor was like an Oriental bazaar.

The dark-skinned dealers in precious stones and a variety of Indian-made articles, clad in gay-coloured garments, wandered about amongst the visitors with swift, gliding movements, eager to dispose of their wares to the best advantage.

It was extraordinary how rapidly they lowered the price of an article when they found there was no sale for it at the price at first demanded. One dealer, more persistent than the others, laid siege to Frank Dane, and used all his arts and wiles to induce him to buy precious stones, stated to be of great value, at a moderate price.

In vain Frank Dane protested he would not buy. The man's importunity increased with opposition.

Frank Dane lost his temper. A dangerous light shone in his eyes. The dealer saw it, and moved away. He could not stand those piercing eyes, which looked him through and through.

As he moved along, he whispered to several of the men who were selling goods, and they in turn looked hard at Frank Dane. Seeing he was an

object of close scrutiny, Frank Dane went outside the hotel.

It was a very hot night. Hardly a breath of wind moved the leaves of the trees, and the heavy scent of tropical flowers seemed to hang in the air and overpower the senses. All was bustle and activity. It was close upon midnight ; but at Colombo night is turned into day, and business goes on briskly.

Frank Dane amused himself by watching a native policeman 'run in' one of the numerous guides lounging about the front of the hotel.

The man went quietly with his captor until the corner of the street opposite was reached, when he suddenly stooped down, twisted his body between the policeman's legs, threw the officer of the law on his back, and fled rapidly away.

The policeman dusted his uniform, made use of some language not understandable by ordinary mortals, and then, instead of chasing the escaped delinquent, coolly seized the nearest 'boy' by the neck and hauled him off to the lock-up.

As he had lost one prisoner, the native guardian of the peace determined to have a substitute.

This scene tickled Frank Dane's fancy, and he laughed.

Seeing him smile, and taking it as a sign of encouragement, a man came up to him. The native, who addressed Frank Dane in fairly good English, was a peculiar-looking object.

At first Frank Dane could not tell whether it was a man or a woman addressing him.

The native divined his thoughts, and explained that he was a man. He had a shaggy head of coal-black hair, which looked like a huge mop. His face was shiny, and so was the upper part of his body, which was naked, and he had a cloth tied round his loins, which reached down nearly to his knees.

The fellow's colour was not black, but a dull, reddish-brown, made soft-looking by a plentiful application of cocoanut-oil.

His eyes were black and cunning, and Frank Dane was attracted by the man's appearance. In answer to the man's request to go round the native quarters, Frank Dane signified his assent. He got into a 'rickshaw,' and the darkie between the shafts bowled him along at a fair pace, his guide running alongside.

They went past the barracks, and had a run along the road by the sea, past the racecourse. The air here was cooler, and Frank Dane stopped his man. He chatted with the guide, and finally started off in another direction.

Half an hour's ride brought them to a somewhat lonely spot. A few miserable-looking huts and hovels were scattered about, and the natives could be seen inside squatting in all kinds of positions, utterly regardless of decency.

Into one of these places the guide took Frank Dane. There were two women inside, one young and not bad-looking, the other old and toothless, and her gums red with juice.

Frank Dane thought what a hag she looked, and wondered why the younger woman lived with her.

The old woman took a large bowl, placed it in the centre of the floor, and then motioned to the other woman to fill it with water. This was done, and the woman then took a stick with several strange devices cut upon it, and stirred the water.

Frank Dane watched her curiously. The weird nature of the scene and the extraordinary surroundings pleased his unbalanced mind.

Presently a bluish light illuminated the hovel, and he heard a wild kind of singing.

'What's the old she-devil up to?' he asked the guide.

'Give her a rupee, and she'll let you look into the water. You will see your future in the bowl,' said the guide.

Frank Dane took out a coin and handed it to the woman. She looked at it, then handed it back, and said:

'English money.'

He gave her a two-shilling piece, and she clasped it eagerly. She stirred the water again, and then rose from the ground. Despite her age, she was active, and she danced in a grotesque style round the bowl. She then pointed into the bowl, and Frank Dane looked.

At first he could see nothing. Then he heard a faint hissing sound, and saw something move in the water. Then he saw the reflection of his own face.

He was thoroughly interested now, and he saw another face come where a moment before had been the reflection of his own. It was the face of a woman ; it looked like Amy Montrose.

Frank started back, but the old woman motioned him to look into the bowl. He did so, and saw his own face again, but distorted, and the eyes ablaze with madness. This vanished, and in its place appeared a man lying on a bed, with his face covered.

‘Take off the cloth,’ he said hoarsely to the woman.

She shook her head and moaned.

‘Take it off, you hag!’ shouted Frank, his mad blood stirring within him.

‘Give her more money,’ said the guide in a whisper.

Frank Dane handed the woman another two-shilling piece. She shuddered as she took it. A look of fear came across her face.

The covering over the face of the man on the bed was gradually drawn upwards. Round the throat Frank saw a blue mark. Suddenly, with a jerk, the covering was withdrawn and the face fully exposed. It was a hideous sight.

Frank Dane gave a yell of rage, and seizing the bowl with both hands, raised it above his head, and then dashed it on to the ground, where it crashed and broke into a hundred pieces. It was his own face he had seen, livid and distorted—the face of a man who had been gradually strangled, and whose

struggles had been horrible. He glared round him, but could see nothing. The guide had disappeared ; the old woman was gone. In the gloomy place he saw a curtain. He pulled it aside and looked in. Then he drew back with a start. In the small space concealed by the curtain he had seen the younger woman lying on a small couch asleep. When he recovered from his surprise, he pulled the curtain aside and stepped in. The curtain fell down behind him. He looked at the sleeping woman for a few moments and then touched her. Light as the touch was, it roused her. She saw Frank Dane looking at her in a queer way, and she sprang up and rushed at the curtain.

He seized her round the waist. She struggled, but did not cry out. He threw her down on the couch and stood over her. She covered her face with her hands.

‘Where is the other woman ?’ said Frank.

The woman waved her hands, and then pointed to the curtain.

‘No, she is not there,’ said Frank.

He heard a sound on the other side of the curtain. He pulled it aside, but saw nothing.

‘Now, you she-devil !’ he cried, turning to her. ‘You are mine ! You shall not escape me !’

He threw his arms round the woman, and she gave a hoarse chuckle. He peered into her face, and then threw her from him with a savage cry of baffled rage. It was the old hideous, toothless hag he had clasped in his arms, and now she sat on the

bed grinning at him. Frank Dane clutched her by the throat and she gave a piercing shriek. Then he was pulled back, thrust out of the hut, and found his guide waiting for him.

Who had handled him so roughly? He meant to know, and would have gone inside the hut again, but the guide stopped him.

'No more,' he said. 'It is dangerous.'

Frank Dane raved and swore, but he did not go inside again. He got into his "rickshaw," and was taken back to the Bristol Hotel.

'Who is that old fiend?' he asked the guide.

'A sorceress,' he replied.

'Who is the younger woman?' asked Frank.

'Her daughter. She is mad.'

Frank Dane gave a start.

'What did you see in the bowl?' asked the guide.

Frank Dane did not answer.

'It will all come true,' said the guide.

'Curse you, go!' said Frank savagely. 'What made you take me there?'

The guide did not answer. He walked swiftly away.

'Have you been out with that fellow as guide,' asked the hotel porter.

'Yes,' said Frank. 'Why?'

'He's a bit queer in his head, that's all,' said the man. 'He's harmless, but his old mother and sister are a dangerous pair. Did he take you there?'

'Yes,' said Frank. 'Are they mad, too?'

'No,' said the man. 'They are great thieves. Have you lost anything, sir?'

Frank Dane searched his pockets.

'No,' he said. 'I have lost nothing.'

'You are lucky, sir,' said the man.

When Frank Dane was in his room he thought over his adventure. That face in the bowl haunted him. He shuddered at the fate in store for him if the vision should prove to be true. He could not sleep. He tossed about uneasily on his bed. It was a hot, sweltering night, and the heat was unbearable. He got up, opened the window, and went on to the balcony.

Passing down the street on the opposite side, he saw the younger woman he had seen on the bed behind the curtain in the hut. She saw him and grinned, showing a set of teeth darkened with some yellowish substance. Then she put her hands round her throat, rolled up her eyes, her tongue protruded, and she imitated a person undergoing strangulation. Frank Dane shook his fist at her, and cursed her. She merely laughed and passed on. He went into his room again and tried to sleep. He left the balcony window open. Towards morning he slept lightly. The first thing he saw on waking was a large blackbird that had come in at the open window, and was perched on a chair looking at him. He threw a brush at it, and the bird flew out at the window, making a strange croaking sound. Frank Dane shuddered. The

croak sounded like the chuckle of the old woman he had taken in his arms last night. He felt unnerved, and was glad when it was time to return to the steamer.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON BOARD THE STEAMER.

FRANK DANE paid his bill at the Bristol, and hurried down the street to the landing-stage. As he walked rapidly along, he was accosted by scores of persistent dealers, and he jostled and pushed them aside in a manner suggesting that further interference with his progress would be dangerous. He reached the landing-stage and jumped into the first native boat lying handy.

‘Better come on the steam-launch, sir,’ said the man in charge. ‘We are going to the *Orizaba* in a few minutes.’

‘I’m all right. Shove off, you lazy devils!’ he said to the two men in the boat.

The darkies pulled away from the shore, and rowed fast past the numerous boats and steamers. When about halfway across, they ceased rowing and demanded their money.

Frank Dane handed the man a shilling, which he declined and held up three fingers.

‘A shilling ; no more,’ said Frank. ‘Pull hard, or I will make it hot for you.’

The men declined to take notice of him. In a

moment Frank Dane seized the man nearest to him and flung him out of the boat into the water, where he swam about trying to get into his frail craft again.

The other man trembled with fright, and well he might. Had he not commenced to row, he would have gone overboard after his companion. The man in the water held on to the end of the boat, and the other man quickly rowed Frank Dane to the steamer.

He got out of the boat, gave the man a shilling, and walked up the gangway. Several passengers on board had seen Frank Dane throw the man out of the boat, and there was a general chorus of approval at his action, as many of these natives are impudent and threatening to the people who employ them.

During the voyage to Colombo, Frank Dane had been somewhat of a mystery on board. He had peculiar ways, and at certain times his conduct was strange. He was not offensive in any way, but he did not make friends readily.

James Fairton perceived a vast difference in his master, and could not account for it. He had not the faintest idea it was Frank Dane, and not Richard Dane, he was accompanying to Sydney.

Frank Dane had a double-berth cabin to himself. He could not bear the thought of having a stranger with him, so he secured the whole cabin.

The *Orizaba* sailed at noon, and Frank Dane was restless until night. He paced the deck

rapidly, and tried to tire himself out. His efforts had no effect, for when he turned into his berth he could not sleep.

It was terribly hot, and the port-hole was wide open. Frank Dane knelt on the seat and looked out. It was moonlight, and the sea was smooth as glass. There was not a ripple on the surface. The water parted evenly on either side of the steamer, and folded over like rolls of some heavy velvety substance. Not the slightest motion could be felt.

Frank Dane felt very strange. He knew one of his mad moods was coming on, and he was afraid. The scene of the past night haunted him. He fastened his door. He did not mean any prying eyes to see the struggle he was about to engage in. He sat down on the seat, and, placing his elbows on his knees, rested his chin upon his hands, and glared at the opposite side of his cabin. For many minutes he sat quite still.

Suddenly he sprang up. His movements were always quick when the madness was on him. As he rose to his feet he caught sight of his face in the looking-glass. It reminded him of the face he had seen in the bowl in the old woman's wretched hut at Colombo. Without a moment's hesitation he smashed the glass with his clenched fist.

'That has stopped all this devil's work,' he muttered.

The crash of the glass brought one of the stewards to his cabin door to make inquiries. Frank Dane

made no answer at first. Another request to know what had happened made him speak.

‘I have smashed the glass,’ he said. ‘It fell out as I was trying to move it.’

‘Shall I clear it up for you, sir?’ said the steward. ‘Broken glass on the floor of your cabin is dangerous.’

‘It will do in the morning,’ said Frank. ‘Good-night.’

The man bade him good-night, and went away.

Frank Dane moved softly about his cabin. He appeared to be searching for something. He went on his hands and knees and looked under the berth.

‘It must have flown out at the porthole,’ he said. ‘How did the black thing follow me here? That bird is an evil spirit. Let me try that old witch of Satan’s experiment.’

He put the plug in the basin, pressed the lever, and filled the bowl full. Then he stirred the water with his hand and danced in front of the bowl.

He looked a queer sight, with his excited face, his glaring eyes, and clad in a bright-coloured pyjama suit. No one, seeing him at this particular moment, would have doubted he was mad.

He peered into the water in the bowl, but saw nothing. He stirred it again, this time with his walking-stick. Another look, and his disordered brain and heated imagination suggested what he certainly could not in reality see.

‘That’s my face,’ he muttered. ‘It’s coming ; I can see it. Ah, it’s you, Amy ! Good-evening. You look stern and cold. What, not one kiss ? I must have just one. Come !’

He bent his head. He gripped the side of the washstand, and then his head plunged into the water. The shock roused him. It brought him to his senses for a few moments. The sane fit did not last long. The madness came on again. He looked out of the port-hole and saw all manner of fantastic shapes and forms dancing in the phosphorescent water.

It was a strange scene. The sea looked like a huge lake of molten fire. To Frank Dane it resembled a burning lake, and he thought it unreal and magical.

‘It is hell,’ he said in a whisper—‘a burning lake of fire. I will not take the plunge yet ; no, I’ll shut it out.’ He closed the port window, and sat down again. ‘Hell outside, hell inside !’ he said, as he clasped his hands to his burning head.

The man was an object of pity. He was suffering unspeakable agony ; his senses were slowly returning ; he was fighting hard to overcome the demon within him. These struggles always told upon him. His mind racked his body ; the working of his brain fatigued him more than the most severe bodily exercise would have done.

On this hot, stifling night, with his cabin-door closed, and the port shut, the heat was unbearable. His pyjamas were wringing wet, and

clung to his skin. He sat hour after hour of the long night fighting, struggling, and gradually mastering himself. His hands were clenched in a death-like grip. He had the madman within him by the throat, and he was strangling the life out of him—strangling himself as he had seen himself lying in the old woman's magical bowl. His teeth were clenched, and his face wore a look of fierce resolution, as though he would sooner die than be defeated.

Down, down almost to his feet he now pressed his clenched hands; he fell on his knees and crushed his hands against the floor of his cabin. He had his madman down now; the final struggle was taking place. With a last effort he crushed his bruised fists on the boards; he gave a sigh of intense relief, and stretched himself on the cabin floor. His hands gradually unclenched, and his face wore a quieter, more peaceful expression. Sleep came to relieve the weary, worn-out brain that had gone through such an awful struggle.

A loud knocking at the cabin door roused Frank Dane. He sat up and stared around him in amazement; he did not realize all he had gone through during the night. He saw the smashed mirror, and the disordered state of the cabin, and he found himself on the floor. The heat was stifling. He scrambled to his feet and flung open the port.

'Are you unwell, sir?' asked James Fairton.

'I have had a bad night,' said Frank Dane; 'I

will dress and come on deck. I am all right, James.'

'Glad to hear it, doctor; I thought you were ill. I have been round half a dozen times. It is ten o'clock.'

Frank Dane dressed himself in a half-dazed kind of way; he felt thoroughly worn out and exhausted. He tried to recall what had happened during the night, but the incidents would not connect, and he was in a state of dire confusion about it. He fancied he must have had a terrible dream about the scene at Colombo. His hands were sore and bruised, and he could not account for that. Never during the whole of his madness had he gone through such a struggle. He went on deck looking pale and worn, and in reply to questions, said the heat and a sleepless night had exhausted him.

'You want a tonic, Dr. Dane,' said the chief officer.

'It would do me good. I will see the doctor and get one.'

He walked away; he did not care for people to pass remarks about his looks.

The ship's doctor thought Dr. Dane had been overworked in London, as he was aware what an extensive practice he had. He also knew that Dr. Dane's brother was insane, and he had an idea the doctor himself was not free from the taint.

'He wanted this voyage badly,' said the doctor

to himself; 'it will do him no end of good. Complete rest for the brain is what he is getting, and it is exactly what he requires.'

If the doctor had known what Frank Dane had gone through during the night, he would not have expressed the opinion that his brain was having a complete rest.

The next night Frank Dane asked James Fairton to sit in his cabin until he went to sleep, as he felt weak and nervous. Fairton did so, and Frank Dane passed a quiet night. He gradually recovered his strength during the remainder of the voyage. The sea-air, the complete change, and the social company, did Frank Dane an immense amount of good. He was in a more rational frame of mind than he had been for many years. That struggle with his mad self in the cabin seemed to have conquered the demon within him for a time.

Frank Dane, however, never disguised from himself the truth; he went forward to meet Amy Montrose full of determination to carry out the schemes he had planned. If he had to end his days in a mad-house, he meant to make the most use of his liberty now.

CHAPTER IX.

AT PARK HOUSE, DOUBLE BAY.

DOUBLE BAY is a pretty suburb of Sydney, situated on the harbour, the bay round which it lies bearing the same name. It is a quiet, homely place, within walking distance of the city, and yet as peaceful and retired as though it were miles away.

The houses are mostly built in the hollow, but on the Edgeware Road, and the road to South Head, many picturesque villa residences are to be seen dotted here and there on the hilly slopes.

The cable-tram runs from King Street to Ocean Street terminus at the top of the hill leading down into Double Bay, and many business people find it convenient to reside here. It is a complete change from the bustle of the city, and a nice breeze from the harbour is refreshing after a hard day's work.

Oswald Montrose was the owner of Park House, and his sister, Amy Montrose, resided with him, and looked after his domestic affairs. He was a widower with one child, a girl, fifteen years of age, Laura Montrose.

When his wife died five years ago, Oswald Montrose wrote to his sister, who resided in London, and asked her to join him in Sydney and take charge of his house and child. It had been a severe trial to Amy Montrose to leave Richard Dane, to whom she was engaged, but she

felt it to be her duty to comply with her brother's request. Amy Montrose having considered compliance to be her duty, had no hesitation in following where that duty led. She was a woman of character—not by any means a 'new woman,' but a woman whose strength of purpose in doing what she believed to be right was paramount.

Richard Dane felt the parting keenly. He urged her to remain in London and throw in her lot with his. At that time he was a hard-worked man, and had not made the position he afterwards secured in the profession.

Amy Montrose finally decided it was her duty to leave London, and she convinced Richard Dane that the course she intended taking was right.

'You are not in a position to marry yet, Richard,' she said. 'I should only hamper you, and pull you back. It is far better for both of us that I should go to Sydney for a time. In a few years it may be different, and then either I can return to you, or you can come to me. That I shall leave entirely with you.' She trusted Richard Dane thoroughly. She did not for one moment think he would break his word to her. She knew her own nature, and felt that the separation would make no difference in her feeling towards him. So Amy Montrose left London and Richard Dane, and came to Sydney.

Oswald Montrose loved his sister dearly, and Laura quickly came to regard her as a second mother. He knew what sacrifices she

had made for him, and he determined to repay her should opportunity offer. Oswald Montrose was a rich man. He had made a fortune as an auctioneer and land and estate agent, and he was much esteemed in Sydney. He had never been mixed up in shady transactions, and his word was considered as good as his bond.

His wife had a fortune of her own, which passed to him when she died over five years ago, and he had invested the money for his daughter until she came of age.

Park House was a charming residence, standing in spacious grounds, which sloped down to the waters of the harbour. The view from the house was exceedingly pretty, and very few places at Double Bay were kept up in better style, or with better taste.

Amy Montrose sat at the open window, a letter in her hand, looking across the blue water of the harbour. She was not a handsome woman, but there was a charm about her which made her irresistibly attractive. That she was a woman of refined, almost too sensitive, feelings no one could doubt.

She read the letter in her hand. She had received it by the last mail from England. It was the letter Frank Dane had written, and which his brother had commenced. Amy Montrose received the cablegram announcing that Dr. Dane was coming to Sydney, and now the letter explained matters more fully.

'It is a sudden resolve on Richard's part,' she thought. 'I wonder if it is a wise step for him to take. He writes in good spirits, but there is something in the tone of the letter unlike him. It is almost too passionate for Richard. He was never a passionate man; but he loves me very dearly, I know, and perhaps his joy at our near meeting may have caused him to write such ardent words. I feel very happy. I was right to leave him for a time. The absence has intensified the joy of our meeting. I feel something of all this passionate love. I think I can understand his feelings.'

She said this with her eyes glowing with a love she did not attempt to control. She loved Richard Dane, and, being a woman to whom love means everything, she felt a thrill of joy such as she had never before experienced at the prospect of their marriage. This was the woman Frank Dane was hastening to meet—the woman he meant to inflict a cruel wrong upon.

'A telegram for you, Miss Montrose,' said the maid, handing her the missive.

Amy took it, and saw it was a cable message. Her heart almost stopped beating in her excitement. 'Could Richard have changed his mind? Perhaps he wished her to go to London.' Such were the thoughts that flashed through her mind as she held the message in her hand. When the maid left the room she opened it, and read:

‘Be on your guard. Frank escaped. Personating me. Am confined in Simpson’s. Explanation impossible by cable.—RICHARD DANE.’

Amy Montrose could hardly believe the evidence of her eyes. What could it mean? She thought over it for some time. Then what she considered a correct solution of the mystery dawned upon her.

‘Poor Frank!’ she said. ‘I am afraid he really loves me. Of course he has sent this news to me. How like him! He still believes he is Dr. Dane. What a shock it gave me at first! I will consult Oswald about it, and see what he says.’

When her brother came home from the city, she handed him the message.

‘Very curious,’ he said. ‘Do you think there is any truth in it, Amy?’

‘No,’ she replied. ‘Frank Dane heard from Richard he was coming out to Sydney. He knows we are engaged to be married, and I believe he loves me in his own mad way. He would not hesitate to send such a cable. You do not know how cunning poor Frank is. He deceives Dr. Simpson sometimes, and I have often heard Richard say he cannot tell at times whether Frank is sane or insane.’

‘But how could he send such a message?’ asked Oswald. ‘Surely Dr. Simpson would not allow it.’

‘Dr. Simpson knows nothing at all about it,’ said Amy. ‘Of that I am sure. Frank has bribed someone to send it. He is not short of money, as Richard makes him an ample allowance.’

‘Would it not be better to cable to Dr. Simpson, and ask him if Frank is still in his charge?’ said Oswald.

‘I hardly think it necessary,’ said Amy. ‘Besides, do you think I could not tell the difference between Richard and Frank?’ she said proudly.

Oswald Montrose laughed.

‘I am sure you would, Amy. But the brothers, you have often told me, are so exactly alike that it is a difficult matter to distinguish one from the other. You have not seen either of them for five years. Even in that time there may be some change in them. I will send a cablegram, Amy. It will give you relief, I am sure, and you will have no hesitation in greeting Richard as your future husband when the steamer arrives. At present there must be a shadow of uncertainty after such a message.’

‘You are very good, Oswald,’ she replied, ‘to take so much trouble. Now you put it in that light, I think it would be better to communicate with Dr. Simpson. Even if Frank has escaped, I fail to see how Richard could be detained in his place. It is impossible—too preposterous to be thought of for a moment!’

‘I do not wish to alarm you, Amy,’ said her brother, ‘but we read of strange things happening in these days. If many of the remarkable cases we read in the papers as genuine facts were made the foundation of a novel, I am afraid we should con-

sider the writer was trying to impress us with the impossible. I once knew a case in Sydney where a medical man actually practised for many years under a name he had assumed. Not till the exposure came was it discovered he had no title either to be called doctor or to the name he went under. It was a most remarkable case, I assure you, and caused no end of sensation at the time.'

'All this is very true,' said Amy; 'but, nevertheless, I am quite certain Dr. Simpson would never detain Richard instead of Frank, even if by some extraordinary and unaccountable means they had exchanged places. He knows them too well to make any mistake.'

'It certainly seems impossible,' said Oswald. 'I will send a message, all the same, Amy. It will be more satisfactory in every way.'

Oswald Montrose sent a cable to Dr. Simpson inquiring if Frank Dane had escaped, and stating his sister had received a message purporting to come from Richard Dane. In as few words as possible he gave Dr. Simpson to understand what had taken place.

The reply came promptly. Dr. Simpson briefly stated Frank Dane was still confined in his asylum, and that Richard Dane had sailed by the *Orizaba*. This news was a great relief to Amy, for although she had treated the cable sent by Simeon Hare in Richard Dane's name lightly, it made her feel uneasy. Now, however, there was no doubt about the matter. Frank Dane was safe in Dr. Simpson's

asylum, and Richard Dane was on his way to Sydney.

When Dr. Simpson received the message from Oswald Montrose, he at once surmised that Simeon Hare had been persuaded by Frank Dane to send a message. Dr. Simpson was naturally indignant at this breach of confidence, for such he considered it, on Simeon Hare's part. When Simeon called again, he declined to allow him to see Dr. Dane.

'You had no business to meddle in the affair, Mr. Hare,' he said.

Looking at it from Dr. Simpson's standpoint, Simeon Hare had to acknowledge this was correct.

'Have you replied to the message you received?' asked Simeon.

'That is my business, Mr. Hare. I decline to say what I have done,' said Dr. Simpson. 'Frank Dane is my patient, and I am responsible both for him, and also his actions, to Dr. Dane.'

'Then, you decline to let me see Dr. Dane,' said Simeon.

'I decline to let you see *Frank* Dane,' said Dr. Simpson.

'And I tell you, doctor, you are labouring under a mistake. It is Dr. Dane you have here, and he is as sane as I am.'

'If you persist in talking so foolishly,' said Dr. Simpson, 'I shall think you are almost as mad as the man you wish to see.'

'Thank you,' said Simeon Hare. 'But I am not at all mad, Dr. Simpson. I give you fair

warning I shall prove you are wrong, and that Dr. Dane and Frank Dane have changed places. I mean to prove this even to your satisfaction. You may smile, sir, but I'll stake my professional reputation on this case. It is, I grant, the most difficult I ever took in hand ; but I am not a man to be easily daunted, and I will save Dr. Dane from a terrible fate.'

'I admire your pluck, Mr. Hare,' said Dr. Simpson, 'and in a good cause it would be most praiseworthy. I do think, however, that in this instance you are exceeding the license your profession allows you. If I hear any more of this, I shall feel it my painful duty to report you at Scotland Yard.'

Simeon Hare started. If Dr. Simpson took such a course, his means of being useful to Dr. Dane would be considerably restricted.

'I will be more cautious, doctor,' he said. 'Perhaps my zeal has carried me away too much.'

'I thought you would see it in that light,' said Dr. Simpson. 'I am glad we understand each other, Mr. Hare.'

CHAPTER X.

THE MEETING.

IT was evident from the excitement and bustle on Circular Quay that a mail-steamer had been signalled and was coming through the heads. The arrival of steamers from England is too common an

occurrence to arouse much interest except in people who have friends on board.

In former days, when the old sailing-vessels put in an appearance, it was different. Then such an arrival was an event of general interest, for news from the old land only reached the colonies at lengthy intervals.

As the Orient wharf was clear, there was nothing to hinder the *Orizaba* from coming straight to her berth, which it was quickly seen she was about to do, as the men on the wharf were busy getting ready for her.

Amy Montrose, accompanied by her brother, was present, and naturally felt anxious to see Richard Dane after an absence of five years.

Oswald Montrose, too, felt considerable interest in his future brother-in-law, more especially since Amy received the cablegram signed Richard Dane. Although Dr. Simpson's answer confirmed the impression Amy had formed that Frank Dane had caused the message to be sent, Oswald Montrose felt curious to see Richard Dane in person.

Oswald Montrose had seen a good deal of the dark side of human nature. He met some curious men and women in the course of his business transactions, and he had known cases where impersonation had been successfully carried out.

Amy Montrose had a recent photograph of Richard Dane, and Oswald Montrose was anxious to compare it with the original. He had not long to wait.

As the *Orizaba* slowly rounded Man o' War Steps at the Point, a crowd of passengers could be seen leaning over her side.

It was too far to single any particular individual out, but as the steamer drew nearer Amy Montrose became more excited, and looked eagerly at the people on the boat.

'Keep calm, Amy,' said her brother with a smile. 'You must look at your best now. You will have plenty of time to have it out with Dr. Dane when we have him quietly fixed up at Park House.'

It had been decided between Amy and her brother that Dr. Dane should be asked to stay at Park House until he had made the necessary arrangements for his residence elsewhere.

Frank Dane was in a state of mind better imagined than described. He felt he had nerve enough for carrying out the deception he was practising. He was, however, anxious to see how Amy greeted him—whether she would recognise him as Frank instead of Richard Dane. With his usual cunning, he had ordered a suit of clothes, to land in, of similar pattern to those his brother had on when his last portrait was taken.

He hunted up Dr. Dane's tailor, and in the character of Dr. Dane ordered a suit similar to the one in the photo he produced. He copied that photo in every way he possibly could, for he rightly conjectured Amy would receive a copy and study it closely.

As Frank Dane stood on the deck of the *Orizaba*,

he looked the living image of the photograph Oswald Montrose had scrutinized so carefully.

Even James Fairton acknowledged the doctor looked himself again, and thought the prospect of meeting his intended wife must have had a magical effect upon him.

Frank Dane looked through a pair of powerful glasses, and he was not long in distinguishing Amy Montrose on the wharf.

How well he knew her features! The blood surged madly through his veins as he looked at her. His hand gripped the glasses firmly, and his eyes sparkled.

The mere thought of possessing this woman he loved long ago, but now hated, of wreaking his wild, insane vengeance upon her, of mocking her and abasing her, of making her life a living horror to her, roused all the bad passions that lay dormant in the unfortunate man.

He shut his glasses and tried to steady himself. Before the wharf was reached he had mastered his feelings.

Amy Montrose recognised him as Richard Dane, and waved her handkerchief.

Frank Dane waved back again. With exultation he saw she recognised him, not as 'poor Frank,' but as Dr. Richard Dane. This was at some distance: perhaps a closer scrutiny might expose him. No; he felt too confident of complete success to admit failure possible.

It took some time to make fast at the wharf.

When the gangway was lowered there was a rush of people on board.

In a few minutes Amy Montrose and her brother were on deck.

Frank Dane came forward eagerly. He took Amy by both hands, looked her in the face, then bent his head and kissed her forehead. Then, as though his feelings had overpowered him, he took her in his arms and imprinted a lingering, passionate kiss on her lips, that seemed to burn into her whole body.

Amy Montrose felt some of the mad passion raging in the man in that embrace, and it startled her. In a moment she thought of his letter, and how love—passionate love—had breathed in every line of it, and she thought she understood.

For some moments neither spoke; then Amy said :

‘ Dear Richard, you cannot know what joy I feel at our meeting. I can hardly find words to express all I mean.’

‘ It has been a long separation, Amy,’ said Frank Dane. Then he said in a low tone : ‘ I hope before many days are gone we shall be man and wife, never to part again in this world—or the next,’ he added.

At the sound of his voice, Amy Montrose looked up quickly. Then she smiled, as she said :

‘ You are eager to take me, Richard. I hope I may prove worthy of you. Do you know why I looked up quickly? I hardly recognised your

voice. Foolish of me, was it not? But I must introduce my brother to you. Oswald, this is Dr. Dane.'

Oswald Montrose shook Frank heartily by the hand, and said :

'I am very glad indeed to meet you, Dr. Dane. My sister, I need hardly say, has made you known to me long ago. I can assure you Amy's word-painting is simply perfect. You are the exact image of the Dr. Dane she has represented to me.'

Amy Montrose blushed slightly as she said :

'Love is an excellent portrait-painter, Oswald. Few of your great painters can excel it.'

'None, I should say,' said Frank Dane. Then, addressing Oswald Montrose, he said: 'Amy's letters have made me well acquainted with you. As her brother!—and such a brother!—I need hardly say I shall welcome the time when we become more closely related, and that time, I trust, is not far distant.'

Further words of mutual greeting passed between them.

In answer to Oswald's pressing invitation to make Park House his home for the present, Frank Dane expressed his delight at such a prospect. He said he had his servant, James Fairton, with him, and Oswald Montrose said that would make no difference, as they had ample room for half a dozen servants if necessary.

'You must be a very great man, Richard, to

travel with your own servant,' said Amy with a bright smile.

'Times have changed since we first met, Amy,' said Frank Dane. 'I am not short of money now.'

'But you will practise in Sydney?' she asked eagerly. 'I should be sorry for you to relinquish your profession. I think it such a noble one.'

'I will practise if you wish it, Amy,' he said.

He had great difficulty in refraining from laughing at the possibilities such a prospect opened up before him.

'If you will excuse me one moment, I will go to my cabin and see if James has everything ready,' he said.

'Certainly,' said Oswald.

'Do not be long,' said Amy.

Frank Dane went below, leaving the brother and sister together.

'What do you think of my choice now?' Amy asked proudly.

'Dr. Dane is a very handsome man, and looks a clever man,' said Oswald Montrose cautiously. He would not express a decided opinion of any man, not even his sister's intended husband, until he had studied him thoroughly.

'He is handsome,' said Amy, 'and he is also very clever, Oswald. But what I meant was, do you like him for himself—for what he is, and for what he will be to me?'

'That is a difficult question to answer offhand,

Amy—or, I should say, series of questions. I think I shall like Dr. Dane very much indeed. More I cannot say at present,' he replied.

With this Amy had to remain satisfied, but it was not the answer she desired.

Frank Dane entered his cabin, closed the door, bolted it, and then gave an exultant laugh.

'She is mine—mine—mine!' he said hoarsely, emphasizing each word. 'I have held her in my arms, I have kissed her lips; and I could feel her whole body respond to my embrace. She loves me! She believes in me! There can be no deception in this—it is me she loves, no one else. "Poor Frank" has won you, Amy We can talk over "poor Frank" now, and we will pull his mad, shattered brain to pieces, and I swore we should. We will dissect him together. Ah, ah! The very thought of the experiment makes me mad with joy! Practise in Sydney? That's lovely! Of course I will. Pretty patients shall be my speciality. Dr. Dane is sure to have pretty patients, for he is said to be a fine-looking man.'

He unbolted the door and called for James.

'Send this cable-message to Dr. Simpson,' he said, 'and when you have seen to my luggage, you can follow me to Park House, Double Bay.'

'Yes, sir,' said James. 'I'll just take a note of the address.'

Frank Dane's cablegram to Dr. Simpson was worded as follows:

‘Arrived safely. Take great care Frank.

‘RICHARD DANE.’

Frank Dane was soon at home at Park House. He was a sociable man when in a fit state of mind to be so, and he never felt better than at this time. He was even sane enough to have some twinges of conscience for the awful injury he was about to do Amy Montrose. These, however, were quickly dispelled when, in the course of conversation, ‘poor Frank’s’ name cropped up.

‘It is very sad, Richard, to think of him being a prisoner in such a place. Is it absolutely necessary?’ said Amy.

‘Absolutely,’ said Frank. ‘He was more than ever convinced he was Dr. Dane when I left.’

‘Poor fellow!’ said Amy. ‘I sometimes fancy, in his mad way, he was fond of me.’

‘Who could help being so?’ said Frank, smiling. Inwardly he was raging at the pity and compassion Amy was showering upon him.

‘Are you, then, so very fond of me, Richard?’ she asked.

‘Yes, darling. You are all the world to me,’ said Frank Dane softly.

The lovers were alone for some time, and Amy Montrose was very happy. She felt, however, that there was a change in her lover’s manner towards her. He was more impetuous, more fond of caressing, and a new desire shone in his eyes. Formerly Richard Dane had been a quiet lover, even too

subdued for Amy, who, although not over-emotional, yet had her womanly feelings developed to the full.

She rather welcomed this change in her intended husband.

Oswald Montrose smoked a cigar with Frank Dane when Amy had retired. Frank's conversation interested him, and he began to like Dr. Dane.

Before Frank Dane left him, Oswald Montrose had promised to find him a nice property where he could settle down and commence the practice of his profession.

They had also decided, if Amy was willing, that the marriage should take place at an early date.

'I have waited so long,' said Frank, as they parted for the night, 'and life is too short to dally with happiness.'

CHAPTER XI.

SIMEON HARE'S MOVE.

SIMEON HARE was perplexed. Dr. Simpson's refusal to allow him to see Dr. Dane placed him in an awkward fix.

He could not very well act without consulting Dr. Dane, and he did not at present see how another interview with him could be arranged. His first

thought was to send another message to Australia, but, after consideration, he came to the conclusion this would be of very little use.

The more he thought over the case, the more difficult it became. Of one thing he was quite certain: the only way to prove Dr. Dane was not Frank Dane lay through Frank himself, and to do this it was necessary he should trap Frank Dane in some way.

Frank Dane being at the other side of the world, this did not appear to be an easy matter. Simeon Hare determined to place the facts of the case before his chief, and ask his advice in the matter. This he did without further delay.

His story was naturally received with a considerable amount of incredulity ; but Simeon Hare had such a first-class reputation that his chief knew he would not have undertaken such a case had he not firmly believed in it.

Simeon Hare at length determined he must go out to Sydney, and alone, as it would be impossible to take Dr. Dane. Once in Sydney, he might be able to devise some plan by which Frank Dane would commit himself.

He determined to make another attempt to see Dr. Dane before he left on his long voyage. He called at Dr. Simpson's and found that gentleman more amicably disposed towards him. The fact of the matter was, Dr. Simpson had been impressed by Dr. Dane's conduct of late, and had

come to the conclusion, not that he was Richard Dane, but that his mind was not so greatly affected as formerly.

Accordingly, when Simeon Hare respectfully asked to be allowed to see the patient, Dr. Simpson acceded to the request upon the condition that the detective would not be guilty of any further indiscretion.

Simeon Hare had no scruples about giving such a promise. He thought he was justified in doing his utmost to prove Dr. Dane was a much-injured man.

Dr. Dane began to despair when Simeon Hare did not call to see him. The weeks went by, precious weeks, during which there was no telling what Frank Dane might do. He chafed under the restraint, but to Dr. Simpson he had changed, and smothered his anger against him. When he saw Simeon Hare enter his room, he was overcome with joy. For some moments he could not speak ; then he said :

‘I thought I was never going to see you again, Simeon. I feared you had abandoned me to my fate, or that Dr. Simpson had persuaded you I was indeed Frank Dane.’

‘No, Dr. Dane ; you need not be afraid of me giving up your case. I have consulted my chief, and although he has but little faith in my theory, he has enough confidence in me to permit me to work for you. I must tell you at once, doctor, that it will be impossible for me to prove you are

not Frank Dane until I have secured your brother, and have ample proof he is insane,' said Simeon.

'How shall you do this?' said Dr. Dane. 'Think what assistance I should be to you if I had my liberty!'

'I have thought of it,' said Simeon Hare; 'but I can think of no plan to get you out. You have very little money. I am glad to say I have arranged for that. A friend of mine will finance the affair on condition you recoup him in a satisfactory manner when you regain your liberty.'

'Of course I will do that,' said Dr. Dane. 'I often wonder, Simeon, what can have induced you to take up my case so ardently.'

'Because I love my profession, just as much as you love yours, Dr. Dane. You stamp out disease, I try and stamp out crime; you unravel the mysterious ailments of the body, and I attempt to solve the mysteries of crime. I am undertaking this case because if I bring it to a successful issue it will greatly add to my reputation. Not only that, but I am interested in it from the strangeness of it; and last, but not least, Dr. Dane, I like you, and wish to repay you for your kindness to me during that severe illness.'

'Not many people would understand your reason for taking up such a case,' said Dr. Dane; 'but I do, and I honour you for it, Simeon. Will you tell me briefly what you intend to do? Every day lost is precious, and gives Frank more time in which to perfect his mad design. My great

hope is that Amy will detect something in him that will give her an inkling of the truth. Frank is so subtle and cunning that I am certain he will deceive her at first. There will be moments, however, when he may be off his guard, and then Amy will wonder at his conduct. It is horrible for me to think of what he may be doing now; it is nearly six months since he changed places with me. To me it is simply marvellous how people have been deceived by him. I can understand the extraordinary likeness he bears to me deceiving them, but surely his actions must have given some hint as to the truth. He resigned my seat in Parliament for me; he sold my practice, and obtained my money from my lawyer; he has usurped my place in the world, and I am cooped up here a sane man, while the madman is free to do as he will. It is monstrous! Simeon Hare, if I am left here much longer to brood over all these things, I shall lose my senses. Even now I find myself doing and saying strange things; I have so little to occupy my mind. You know what an active life I have led, working almost day and night, and the change to this wearisome monotony is terrible. Sometimes,' said Dr. Dane in a low tone, 'I imagine I am indeed Frank Dane. I put myself in my brother's place, and wonder how he thought and felt here. I am beginning to feel what a man like Frank must feel when shut up in a place like this. Another six months like the last, Simeon, and you will have

no cause to try and obtain my freedom, for I shall be a fit subject to be detained here.'

'Come, doctor,' said Simeon; 'you must not give way to these gloomy fancies. All depends upon yourself. When your brother is face to face with you, much will depend upon your conduct. Let me tell you what I propose to do, what my next move is.'

'Yes, do,' said Dr. Dane eagerly.

'I start for Sydney next week,' said Simeon.

'And leave me here,' said Dr. Dane.

'It cannot be helped,' said Simeon; 'I see no way out of it. Even if you were free, there is the expense to be considered. I could not manage to raise enough for both of us. What I want you to do, doctor, is to give me a free hand in this matter. I may have to take severe measures with your brother.'

'I will not have Frank injured in any way,' said Dr. Dane. 'Poor fellow! his sufferings must be awful.'

'I am not going to injure him in any bodily way,' said Simeon Hare. 'Don't you trouble yourself about your brother's sufferings, Dr. Dane. A man with his form of insanity does not suffer much when he is free. It is when he is confined the madman within him suffers. What I mean by taking severe measures with him is that I shall not scruple to try and make him expose his true nature before Miss Montrose and her brother. I shall watch him closely, and you may rest assured I

shall quickly find out his weak points. He knows me, and he will probably be surprised to see me. I shall address him as Dr. Dane, and lead him to think I have not the slightest suspicion he is Frank Dane. I have a letter of introduction to a very clever detective in Sydney, and he will be able to help me. This is the only man I shall explain matters to, until I see how the land lies. I am not about to deal with an ordinary impostor, Dr. Dane. Your brother is of a far different class to such men. His form of insanity makes him very difficult to deal with. Not only will he be dangerous when cornered, but his cunning brain will devise means of escape a sane man would never dream of. Believe me, Dr. Dane, there are a lot of madmen going about in the world at the present time who are regarded as clever people.'

Dr. Dane listened attentively to all the detective said. He had to place entire reliance upon the man, and he felt he could do so. He acknowledged the difficulty of the task Simeon Hare had before him.

'I want you to take these letters with you,' said Dr. Dane. 'Dr. Simpson does not know I have written them. One is to Amy, the other to her brother. I do not know him personally, but from all Amy has said about him I think you will find in him a stanch ally. He is evidently a man of determination, and capable of understanding even such a case as this. I advise you to see Oswald Montrose as soon after you land as possible. He

may be able to prevail upon Amy to believe you, and also to believe my letter. Frank has a dangerous power over women. He always had. I was never a very ardent lover, Simeon, and Amy will recognise a change if she accepts Frank in my place.'

'I will see Mr. Montrose as early as possible,' said Simeon. 'Do not alarm yourself unnecessarily about Miss Montrose, doctor. I feel certain, even if she does not recognise Frank Dane in his true character at first, she will not fail to do so when he is constantly with her. He must betray himself in some way. He cannot possess the knowledge you have, because he has not read Miss Montrose's letters.'

'He may have read them,' said Dr. Dane sadly; 'I kept them all. No doubt he found them in my study and read them. You see everything is against me, Simeon—everything!'

Simeon Hare tried hard to cheer Dr. Dane, but it was a difficult task.

When he left the unfortunate man, the detective felt keenly for him. He promised to write to him, and Dr. Simpson would no doubt see he received the letters.

'Until I have something very important to communicate, I will write in an ordinary way, so that even if Dr. Simpson read the letters he would have no suspicion of what I was doing,' he said.

Dr. Dane shook Simeon Hare by the hand, and was loath to let him go.

He felt when the door closed behind the detective his only friend had gone from him.

Dr. Dane's sufferings were intense. He constantly pictured to himself Amy Montrose in the power of Frank Dane. He wondered if she would marry him. The mere thought maddened him. He prayed to God to stop such an awful union, to save Amy from the madman's embraces.

Small wonder that Dr. Dane was altered in appearance. He was a very different man from Dr. Dane the fashionable physician, the popular Member for A——, and one of the finest-looking men in the House. He was worn and weary, heartsick and dejected. Could a worse possible fate have befallen any man? Not only had he to contemplate his own dire misfortunes, but he had to undergo the terrible ordeal of knowing the woman he loved was in fearful danger, and he could not help her. The thought of Amy haunted him night and day.

Loss of position, even utter ruin, he could have faced bravely, but this awful suspense tortured him. Would Simeon Hare be in time to prevent irreparable mischief? So much time had been lost. So many weeks still had to pass before the detective could reach Sydney.

Dr. Dane was not a coward, but his heart failed him when he thought of what might happen before another year came round.

CHAPTER XII.

LUCK FAVOURS FRANK DANE.

A DESPERATE gang of burglars in London had threatened to 'do for' Simeon Hare, who had been instrumental in bringing several of them to justice.

The detective had no doubt in his own mind the cab accident was no accident at all, but a deliberately planned attempt to fatally injure him. Since that time he had been more cautious than usual.

Simeon Hare was pleased at the prospect of his coming voyage to Sydney. He was not at all loath to leave London and its dangers for a time.

The night after he had seen Dr. Dane, Simeon Hare was walking along the Embankment in the direction of Scotland Yard. It was late, and business had detained him in the City. He passed the Temple Gardens, and then crossed over the road. Two men were leaning over the wall looking into the water, and did not even raise their heads as he passed.

No sooner, however, had Simeon Hare got a few paces beyond them than he received a terrific blow on the head, and another on the arm.

The detective fell on the pavement, stunned, but not insensible. He was, however, too dazed to offer much resistance. The two men who had been leaning over the Embankment wall had evidently been on the watch for him, and had succeeded only too well in their dastardly outrage.

They were trying to drag Simeon Hare to the wall, with the evident intention of throwing him into the river, when the sound of footsteps approaching frightened them. They dropped the detective hurriedly on to the pavement, and made off at a quick pace past the Temple Station, then up Norfolk Street, and so into the Strand.

Simeon Hare dragged himself towards the wall, but the effort was too much for him, and he fell back with a groan.

It was a constable the assailants heard, and when he reached Simeon Hare he fancied it was some drunken reveller homeward bound.

'Here, get up out of this,' said the constable, pushing the prostrate man with his foot.

Simeon answered with such a groan of evident pain that the constable could not mistake the cause of it.

'He's hurt. Must have fallen down and broken his arm or something.'

The constable knelt down on one knee and raised the detective's head.

'Well, I'm blessed!' said the surprised constable, 'if it ain't Simeon Hare! Mr. Hare, what's happened? Are you much hurt?'

'I've been attacked,' said Simeon in a weak voice. 'Had an awful blow on the head. I fancy my arm's broken, too. Who is it?'

'It's me, sir. Dennis Maloy,' said the constable.

'Take me home, Dennis,' said Simeon Hare. 'I'm done for this time, I believe.'

‘It’s not as bad as that, I hope,’ said the constable. ‘I will call for assistance at once.’

He blew his whistle, and in a few minutes a second constable appeared on the scene. A cab was called, and Simeon Hare taken home.

Next morning he was delirious, and his life was in danger for a week. Then he showed signs of recovering. The blow he received on his head had narrowly missed killing him on the spot. His left arm was broken and had been set, and was in splints. When Simeon came to himself, he asked the doctor how long it would be before he could travel to Sydney.

‘You can start in another month, but in order to do that you must take a complete rest,’ said the doctor. ‘The voyage will do you good, but you will not be fit for much severe work for a long time.’

Simeon Hare groaned as he thought what this delay might mean to Amy Montrose and Dr. Dane. There was no help for it, however, and all he could do was to remain quiet and endeavour to recover his strength as speedily as possible.

‘Luck favours Frank Dane,’ he thought. ‘This will give him more time in which to carry out his plans. What an unfortunate fellow Dr. Dane is! It is a blessing he does not know what has happened to me. If he did, the delay would drive him mad.’

There was, however, to be still more delay.

One of the men supposed to be implicated in the

assault on Simeon Hare was apprehended. This was vexatious to Simeon, who would much rather have proceeded on his journey without any further trouble. He failed to recognise the prisoner as one of the men who attacked him, and as the evidence was not of a satisfactory nature, the man was discharged. The fellow, however, had no sooner left the dock than he was re-arrested on a charge of burglary. Simeon Hare smiled to himself as he thought :

‘I believe he was one of the men, but if I’d sworn to him he’d have been committed for trial, and then there would have been a delay of some weeks. Anyhow, I am glad the blackguard has been arrested for burglary. He is sure to get five or seven years if he’s an old hand at it, and he looks it.’

The Fates did indeed seem to be working all in favour of Frank Dane. He had now been some time in Sydney, and had so far conducted himself so that no one had found anything peculiar about his manner.

Oswald Montrose liked him, but there was something about Frank Dane he could not make out. To Oswald Montrose, Frank Dane appeared to be a man always on his guard, careful of everything he said or did. He saw a great deal of Frank Dane during his residence at Park House. He studied him closely. He was anxious for his sister’s sake that her future husband should be a man in whom he had every confidence.

One of Frank Dane’s first moves was to present

his brother's diplomas and other papers to the Medical Board in order to qualify as a practitioner in the colonies. There had been no difficulty about this.

Dr. Dane was well known to more than one medical man in Sydney personally, through having been acquainted with him in London. So Frank Dane was recognised as Dr. Richard Dane, and was welcomed in good society as an exceedingly agreeable and clever man. A convenient residence being to let in College Street, opposite Hyde Park, Frank Dane decided to take it, as the locality was popular with medical men.

'You can look out for a nice property for me, all the same,' he had said to Oswald Montrose; 'but for the present I think it will be better for me to reside in the city, and from all I can see and hear, College Street is about as good a locality as I could select.'

Amy Montrose upheld him in this view. She was exceedingly anxious he should commence to practise as speedily as possible. So Frank Dane had a brass plate put on his door with

DR. RICHARD DANE

on it in plain black letters. This plate appeared to give Frank Dane unlimited pleasure. He always entered the gate slowly, so that he could admire the name on this shining brass plate. It was the one thing about the place he insisted upon being cleaned every morning. He gave James

Fairton strict instructions that this plate must have a brilliant polish on it every day.

‘He’s mighty proud of it,’ thought James. ‘Never knew him to be so particular at home. Perhaps he thinks Miss Montrose takes a pride in seeing his name on the door. She’s a nice woman, a very nice woman. She’ll make a good mistress. There’s no nasty stuck-up pride about her. She’s a lady, which is more than some high and mighty women I’ve met here are.’

Frank Dane had insisted upon Amy Montrose furnishing the house as she liked.

‘I hope you will live in it soon, Amy,’ he said. ‘The only rooms I will furnish are my study and reception-room ; the rest of the house I wish you to have furnished as you like.’

Amy agreed to this, and took a pride in making her future home as comfortable as possible without being extravagant.

It had been arranged the marriage was to take place two months after Frank Dane had settled in his new home. Until that time James Fairton and a former housekeeper of Oswald Montrose’s were to look after his comfort.

Frank Dane experienced intense satisfaction as he looked round the house and thought how, in a few weeks, Amy Montrose would be there as his wife.

The first night he slept there he locked himself in his study, and, free from observation, gave way to the mad feelings that again possessed him.

It had been a fearful strain upon him to keep control over himself during his stay at Park House. He knew Oswald Montrose watched him closely, and many a time his fingers itched to be at his host's throat. Even in Amy's presence he had to be always on his guard.

An occasional odd saying would escape his lips which caused remark, but he had managed to turn it off.

He knew, however, that he could not keep this hold over the devil within him much longer, and so he had hurried on the time for his departure from Double Bay.

Now he was alone in his study he was freed from restraint. He was in a frenzy of mad delight. He laughed and talked to himself, and strode about the room in a hasty but aimless manner. His words came in incoherent fashion, and he laughed at his own nonsense.

Out of pure devilment he sat down and wrote a long letter to his brother, in which he gave a full account of his proceedings. He drew an awful picture of his passion for Amy Montrose, and stated when the wedding was to be. Over this part of the letter he dwelt with insane fondness. No man in his senses would have tortured his brother as this madman knew the words he had written would torture Richard Dane.

In case he should forget to post the letter, he addressed it and put it on his desk. Then his mood changed, and he became quieter.

'I wonder who my first patient will be?' he thought. 'Some charming widow, I hope, or perhaps a plain widow would be better until I am married. Once Amy is mine, I am satisfied. I have been tortured long enough. It will relieve me to have someone handy to vent my feelings on. That fool Oswald I shall have to get rid of. Sometimes I fancy he half suspects me. He is a shrewd man. But I am mad, Oswald Montrose, and therefore a match for you. My own familiar demon's sure to suggest some way out of the difficulty—he always does. Curse him! he can always be relied upon. Fancy a man being frightened at the suggestions of his own imagination! I have been, several times.'

Frank Dane called James Fairton before he went to bed the first night he was in his new house, and said:

'James, I feel nervous to-night. Sleep in the room next to mine. I will call you if I require anything.'

'Strange how he gets these fits!' said James to himself. 'He never used to have 'em. If the prospect of getting married makes a man nervous, I'm glad I'm not likely to be taken that way.'

That night James Fairton heard strange sounds in the doctor's room. He mentioned it in the morning.

'That's curious, James. I thought I heard you walking about in your room. I think you must walk in your sleep.'

James Fairton indignantly denied that he walked around at unearthly hours. He persisted in saying he heard sounds in the house, and thought they came from the doctor's room.

Frank Dane wondered if he ever walked in his sleep. It would be dangerous if he did. He did not recollect waking throughout the night. He thought he had slept soundly.

'If James heard these sounds, I must have been doing something in my sleep,' he said to himself.

The thought caused him to feel uneasy. It would never do for him to lose control over himself in this way.

In the course of the day, however, he forgot all about it, nor did James Fairton mention the matter again to him.

CHAPTER XIII.

'DR. DANE'S' PATIENT.

A MAN of Richard Dane's reputation was not likely to be long without patients.

Frank Dane knew this, and was, therefore, prepared to be called upon or sent for at any moment.

He had not long to wait.

One morning, about half-past nine, a man called at Frank Dane's house to consult him as to the

nature of an internal complaint he said he suffered from.

This man was a quiet, mild-looking individual, and seemed to be of a nervous disposition. He started up as Frank Dane came into the room, and said :

‘Dr. Dane, I presume.’

‘Yes,’ said Frank ; ‘you wished to consult me.’

‘I am suffering horribly from some internal complaint, and I do not know what it is,’ he said.

‘I will examine you,’ said Frank.

He proceeded to make a thorough examination of the man, and after fully a quarter of an hour had passed without a word being spoken by either of them, Frank said :

‘I am sorry to tell you there is a cancerous growth under your left arm, and if you do not have it attended to at once, it will be a serious matter for you. The gland is resting on the axillary vein, and if you don’t have it removed, swelling of the arm, and gangrene, will probable take place. I strongly advise you to have an operation performed, and have the gland removed from the axilla.’

The man looked at him curiously.

‘You give a very decided opinion, Dr. Dane,’ he said.

‘That is what you came for, I presume,’ said Frank.

‘Well, yes, it is,’ laughed the man ; ‘and I am much obliged to you for it, doctor. I was not

aware I had any cancerous growth under the arm, although, now you mention it, I have felt a slight swelling there.’

‘I can assure you the best course you can adopt is to have the operation performed as speedily as possible,’ said Frank.

‘Will you perform the operation?’ asked the man.

‘No,’ said Frank ; ‘but I will be present at the time.’

‘Don’t you go in for operations?’ asked the man.

‘I prefer to leave such matters to men better able to perform them than I am. I am not a skilful surgeon.’

‘You are candid, doctor.’

‘Yes ; I find it is always better to be candid with one’s patients,’ said Frank.

‘Can you recommend a doctor who would perform the operation?’ asked the man.

‘Yes,’ said Frank, and gave him an address card.

‘Not long from England, doctor?’ asked his patient.

‘No,’ said Frank. ‘I had an extensive practice in London, but gave it up. I am about to be married.’

‘I wish you every happiness,’ said the man.

‘Thanks,’ said Frank, smiling in a peculiar manner which did not escape the keen eyes of the man, who was regarding him earnestly.

'May I ask the lady's name?'

'You are inquisitive, my man,' said Frank; 'but I see no reason why I should not give it you. My intended wife is Miss Amy Montrose, sister of Mr. Oswald Montrose.'

'You're a lucky man, doctor! He's a rich man, and his sister is sure to come in for a slice of his money.'

'I am glad to say I do not require any man's money,' said Frank haughtily; 'I am independent of any help from outside.'

'Glad to hear it,' said the man; 'wish I was. I have to work hard for my living.'

'By-the-by, what is your name?' asked Frank. 'I must enter it in my book.'

'Reuben Short,' replied the man.

'Well, Mr. Short, if you think I have given you all the advice you require, I shall be glad if you will excuse me, as I have other patients to attend,' said Frank.

'Thank you, doctor; you have given me every satisfaction. There is your fee;' and he placed two guineas on the table.

'One will be sufficient from you,' said Frank.

'You are very kind,' replied Reuben Short, as he pocketed a guinea; 'I never decline offers of this kind—it's false pride.'

'Good-morning,' said Frank Dane.

'Good-morning, doctor; I will consult the gentleman you have named as to the operation.'

'Curious man!' thought Frank Dane; 'inquisi-

tive too. I wonder if that is a cancerous growth under his arm. It is probable. Anyhow, I should like to see him operated on. I can't say I am much taken with him.'

Reuben Short crossed the road, went into the Park, and sat down on a quiet seat near Captain Cook's statue. He looked at the figure of the great discoverer, and seemed to be lost in contemplation. A passer-by might have fancied he was recalling incidents in the life of the navigator, but Reuben Short's thoughts had nothing to do with Captain Cook.

He had certainly been on a voyage of discovery when he called upon Frank Dane, and he contemplated the stone figure on its pedestal, because he was in the habit of fixing his eyes upon a certain object when he was in deep thought. Reuben Short smiled to himself as he said half aloud :

'So I'm a cancerous subject, eh, Dr. Dane? Thank you for nothing. He's about hit the mark, though, and he's a cleverer man than I fancied he would be. Let me have another read at that letter.'

Reuben Short took a letter from his pocket, and read it carefully.

'It's about the rummiest thing I ever heard of,' he muttered. 'What the deuce am I to do? I can't arrest the man. There's been some mistake somewhere. Dr. Dane's sane enough, at any rate. I shall have to wait until Simeon Hare comes

out. Bad luck that about the assault ; he'd have been here weeks ago but for that. Simeon's a cute fellow, but he's made a mistake this time.'

Reuben Short was a detective, and the letter he held in his hand had been written at Simeon Hare's dictation as soon as he recovered his proper senses. In this letter Simeon had fully explained the facts of the case as known to the reader, and had requested Reuben Short to keep a strict watch on Frank Dane. At first Simeon thought it would be better to keep his case to himself until he reached Sydney, but when he was delayed in London he changed his mind, and sent Reuben Short, who had been in the force with him in London, full particulars by letter.

Reuben Short visited Frank Dane for the express purpose of pumping him and watching him closely. That he had not succeeded in extracting much from him he was well aware. When 'Dr. Dane' informed him of the nature of the growth under his arm, Reuben Short was convinced Simeon Hare must have blundered. He knew the growth under his arm was as Frank Dane described it, and therefore he had no doubt about 'Dr. Dane' being a qualified man.

'I wonder if I ought to show this letter to Oswald Montrose,' thought Reuben. 'Simeon thinks not, unless some desperate measures have to be taken. If Dr. Dane is Frank Dane, and not a doctor at all, and is also insane, then he ought to be prevented from marrying Miss Mont-

rose. I thought I would get that bit of information from the doctor himself. He is evidently bent on marrying Miss Montrose, and she is willing. He didn't seem to like Oswald Montrose. I judged that by the way he answered me about the money. Simeon's been deceived by the real Frank Dane, that's my opinion. How wonderfully alike they must be, but it don't stand to reason Miss Montrose would mistake one brother for the other. If I see Mr. Montrose he's sure to try and prevent this marriage. Now, in case Dr. Dane is Dr. Dane and not Frank Dane, it would be doing them a real bad turn. It's a nasty position for me to be placed in. I think I'll hold back a bit, and see if I can find out how Dr. Dane gets on in his practice. If he's Frank Dane, and mad, he's sure to get into a mess. I hope he won't kill anyone. It's rather a dangerous experiment, to be attended to by a doctor whose senses are not all there.'

Had Frank Dane known who Reuben Short was, and what was the purpose of his visit, he would have been very uneasy. He did not know, however, and merely regarded Short as an ordinary patient.

Having nothing particular to do one afternoon, Frank Dane took a walk into the Domain, and went into the National Gallery to look at the pictures. He was fond of pictures, especially if they were weird and uncommon.

Quite by accident he met Amy Montrose there. They were mutually pleased to see each other.

'How strange I should come this afternoon!'

she said. 'Are you fond of pictures, Richard? You did not care much about them a few years back.'

'I had not much time then, Amy,' he said; 'I am very fond of a good picture.'

'So am I,' replied Amy; 'I often spend an hour in the Gallery. I wish I could paint well.'

'What would be your favourite subject if you were an artist?' asked Frank.

'Home scenes,' she said—'something quiet and peaceful. I should prefer to depict happiness, not misery. There is too much misery in the world, Richard, and too little happiness.'

'That's not my idea of pictures,' said Frank absently; 'I think I should like to paint devils.'

Amy Montrose looked at him in an amazed, half-offended way, and said:

'Really, Richard, that is a most extraordinary desire, to be an artist in order to paint devils. Whatever induced you to make such a remark? I am sure you don't mean it.'

'But I do, Amy. We doctors see a good deal of the work of devils. If some of the dark deeds and sufferings we see were painted in all their horrible reality on canvas, I am sure it would do good—act as a deterrent. It would be an unpleasant subject, but in its way it would be quite as useful and instructive as your pictures of happiness,' said Frank.

'If you look at it in that light, perhaps you are right,' said Amy; 'for all that, I should prefer my

happy homes to your terrible paintings of the results of evil.'

'That is like the good woman you are, Amy,' he said. 'Sit down for a few moments, and I will try and explain what I mean by painting devils.'

Amy Montrose thought what a strange mood Richard was in. She was right. Frank Dane's mind was in a morbid state this afternoon. His brain was peopled by strange fancies. He felt an irresistible desire to tell Amy his thoughts.

'I once attended a curious case in London,' said Frank; 'a very charming woman married a man who went insane. He was insane for several years before the madness overcame him, and he had to be placed under control. They had three beautiful children.'

'Don't tell me any more, Richard,' said Amy; 'it is horrible!'

'Listen,' said Frank, who took no heed of her interruption. 'These children, Amy, when each one reached the age of twelve, were all insane. Their pitiable condition drove their mother to distraction, and her brain reeled and she had to be watched. It was an awful sight, Amy! I saw it all. I see it now. I should like to paint that picture if I were an artist; paint those beautiful children with the faces of angels and the minds of devils; paint that lovely mother with her brain diseased, her senses reeling, dead to maternal feelings, wishing to kill those she had brought forth.'

Frank Dane rose to his feet in his excitement.

'I should like to paint them as I see them now; paint them so that the devils raging within them could be seen peering through the lovely mask of their faces, hiding the hideous deformity of their minds. I would call that picture "Devils," Amy. The one word would convey the horrible tale to everyone.'

Amy Montrose had risen to her feet. She took Frank by the arm.

'Richard, dear Richard, what are you saying? what are you doing? Think where you are. You are attracting attention,' said Amy, in alarm at his strange manner.

It was correct. Frank Dane was attracting attention. His wild look and strange attitude and gestures had caused several people to turn and regard him curiously. With a great effort Frank Dane recovered himself and sat down.

'I beg your pardon, Amy,' he said quietly; 'I was excited. The misery of that picture appalled me. You see, I was right. If the mere inadequate word-painting of such a picture can rouse such feelings, what would be the effect of such a scene depicted by a great artist on canvas? Do you understand now what I mean Amy, when I said I should like to paint devils? I had that very scene I have described to you in my mind.'

It was true Frank Dane had such a scene in his mind. His imagination pictured it. Amy would have fled from him in terror had she known she

was the lovely woman in the terrible picture he had drawn for her.

‘You must not dwell on such morbid fancies, Richard,’ she said. ‘Come out into the open air.’

He followed her obediently.

‘I am very sorry, Amy,’ he said. ‘After all, it would be far better to paint your happy scenes than my devils.’

‘How strangely excited you were!’ said Amy.

‘I was. Such a scene as I have witnessed in reality would excite a less sensitive man than myself when he thought of it and saw it all again,’ said Frank.

‘But think what men in your noble profession can do to ameliorate the lot of such sufferers,’ said Amy. ‘That must be a happy thought, Richard.’

‘It is, Amy,’ he said. ‘Sometimes, however, it is a case of “Physician, heal thyself.”’

‘What do you mean?’ asked Amy, startled.

‘I mean some medical men need healing quite as badly as the patients they attend,’ said Frank.

‘I am glad you are not one of them,’ said Amy.

‘I feel perfectly well now, Amy,’ said Frank, ‘and I hope I shall have good health to work hard, and make you proud of me.’

‘I cannot be prouder of you than I am now,’ said Amy lovingly; ‘I hope soon to be able to help you, Richard, in your work.’

He looked at her curiously, and then said with a smile:

‘You are attracted by my profession, Amy. We will study how to relieve suffering humanity together.’

She was pleased at his answer, as Frank Dane intended she should be. He wished to dispel the ill-effects his wild talk might have caused.

CHAPTER XIV.

REFLECTIONS.

IN the quietude of her own room, Amy Montrose could not help reflecting over her lover's strange conduct and stranger words in the Art Gallery. It would have been curious had she not done so. It was now only a week before her marriage, and Amy Montrose knew what a serious step she was about to take.

Frank Dane's insanity caused her to pause and think over the matter of a family taint. The strange language used by ‘Dr. Dane’ made her wonder if her lover could by any possible means be of an unevenly balanced mind. She had not the slightest suspicion she was about to marry Frank Dane, and not Richard Dane.

She had not mentioned all that had taken place in the Art Gallery to her brother, for she knew he was prejudiced in some unaccountable manner against ‘Dr. Dane.’ She wished if possible to dispel this prejudice before her marriage, and she

knew it would be a difficult task. When her brother made up his mind, he generally stuck to it, and he was seldom wrong. In this case, however, Amy felt sure he was mistaken, and that for once he had erred in his knowledge of mankind.

There was a vague uneasiness in Amy's mind she could not account for. She was depressed, and could not shake off the feeling. It was not because she loved Richard Dane less, but she fancied she detected something different in him from the Richard of old days.

Frank Dane had been very careful, but he could not prevent at times a glimpse of his peculiar mental condition appearing. In the Art Gallery he had been led away by the nature of the picture his imagination had suggested, and he blamed himself for it afterwards.

When Oswald Montrose returned home, he found Amy in a more serious mood than usual. She had half made up her mind to tell her brother what had occurred in the Art Gallery. Perhaps it would be better she should do so. It was not well for Richard to have these morbid fancies. After dinner she could see Oswald had something on his mind that he hesitated to speak to her about.

Oswald Montrose, when he reached his office in the morning, had found Reuben Short waiting for him. He knew Short, as most public men in Sydney did, and trusted him.

When Reuben Short unfolded his tale, and produced Simeon Hare's letter, Oswald Montrose felt his suspicions were confirmed to the letter, and that his sister's marriage must at all hazards be delayed. He thanked Reuben Short for his information, and promised him he would act firmly in the matter.

'It is this way, Mr. Montrose,' said Reuben : 'there is no proof against Dr. Dane. Personally, I think he's as sane as I am ; but whether he is Frank Dane or Richard Dane I do not know. I considered it better to tell you, because you are Miss Montrose's brother. My own opinion is that Simeon Hare has made a mistake, and that Dr. Dane is now in Sydney, and Frank Dane has bamboozled Simeon into believing he is Richard Dane.'

'It is a very difficult matter, Short,' Oswald said—'very difficult indeed. I am afraid I shall never be able to make my sister see how the case stands from my point of view.'

'It is a most extraordinary thing Miss Montrose has not recognised Dr. Dane as Frank Dane, if he is personating his brother. That is the great point in his favour. As for his being a doctor, I'm quite sure on that point ; he gave me a perfectly correct account of my ailment. I was examined by another doctor, who confirmed Dr. Dane's opinion in every particular,' said Reuben Short.

'You did quite right to place these facts before

me, Short,' said Oswald, 'and I shall take my own course. As you say, Dr. Dane appears to be a clever medical man.'

'I'm sure of it,' said Reuben Short; 'and he's smart too, and goes about his work in a business-like manner.'

It was his interview with Reuben Short that troubled him as he sat looking at his sister. He loved Amy dearly, and she had been a mother almost to his child. He could not forget her kindness. It would be a cruel wrong to shatter her faith in Dr. Dane, but it would be far more terrible to let her marry Frank Dane instead of Richard Dane.

Oswald Montrose argued the case for and against, and was as yet undecided which course to take. He hardly knew how to broach the subject—it was such a delicate matter even to hint at a postponement of the wedding. Amy he knew would offer strenuous objections to it, and it would be of no use consulting Dr. Dane.

'Something is troubling you, Oswald,' said Amy. 'Anything gone wrong in business matters?'

'No,' said Oswald; 'but you are quite right, Amy, I am troubled—and about you.'

'About me,' said Amy in surprise. 'What have I done to cause you trouble?'

'Nothing, dear,' he replied; 'you have never caused me trouble. You have been the best and kindest of sisters, and I am very grateful. I am not troubled about you in that way, Amy; I am thinking of the future.'

'Ah,' said Amy, 'I am sorry you do not like Richard. When you see what a good husband he makes, then you will alter your opinion.'

'I *must* tell you, Amy,' he said. 'You may think me unkind and ungrateful, but even at this risk I must do what I think is right by you.'

'What is it you want me to do?' said Amy. 'I am sure you wish to ask me something. There is only one thing, Oswald, I will not do for you, and that is give up Richard.'

'I want you to postpone your marriage, Amy,' he said seriously; 'I do not want you to give up *Richard Dane*.'

'Why do you want the marriage postponed?' asked Amy.

'I would rather not tell you,' he said, 'unless you refuse to comply with my request. If you do so, I shall feel compelled to tell you what I have heard, and what is my own opinion.'

'Oswald, you have done much for me during the past five years, and I would willingly do all in my power to give you pleasure. But in the question of my marriage I do not stand alone. I have to consider Richard, and I must refuse to ask his consent to a postponement of our marriage.'

'It is as I feared,' said Oswald: 'I must tell you all I know. This morning a man named Reuben Short, an able detective, called to see me. He had in his possession a letter from Simeon Hare, a London detective. That letter states in the most emphatic terms that Dr. Simpson is mis-

taken, and that Richard Dane is confined in the asylum, and that it is Frank Dane who is now in Sydney.'

Amy smiled, and her brother saw what a difficult task he had before him; but he determined to go on with it.

'You may smile, Amy,' he said; 'but I assure you I regard the matter very seriously.'

'Surely you do not believe Richard is Frank Dane? My dear Oswald, it is too preposterous! Do you think I do not know the man I have loved all these years?'

'It is difficult for me to explain to you, Amy, all I think. Why I wish you to postpone the marriage is because I wish to see Simeon Hare, who is on his way out to Sydney, in connection with this matter,' said Oswald.

'It is disgraceful,' said Amy indignantly. 'Frank Dane has given this man money to try and injure Richard. I know Frank's cunning mind, and his animosity to his brother, from whom he has received nothing but kindness. Say no more, Oswald. I will not be a party to any such scheme as you propose.'

'At any rate, Amy, you will give me credit for only doing what I think best in your interests and for your happiness?' said her brother in a pained voice.

'I am quite sure of that,' she said kindly. 'Dear Oswald, I know you mean and believe all you say, but trust my love to be right. A woman's

love is more reliable than any amount of evidence in such a case as this.'

'Love is sometimes blind,' said Oswald with a sigh, as he kissed his sister's forehead tenderly.

'Blind to the faults of the loved one, perhaps,' said Amy; 'but not so blind as to mistake one man for another.'

'Then, you will not try and persuade Dr. Dane to postpone the wedding?' he asked.

'No, Oswald; I cannot do it. It would not be right,' she said.

'Then, I must ask him myself,' said Oswald.

Amy Montrose drew herself up to her full height, and she looked a woman born to command and to be obeyed as she said:

'I forbid you to do so. Much as I love you, Oswald, I will never speak to you again if you do this.'

Oswald Montrose was in a dilemma. He hardly knew which way to turn. There was still a week. He must trust and hope.

Perhaps, after all, Amy was right, and Frank Dane in a mad mood had bribed the detective to do this thing.

Then, Reuben Short believed in Dr. Dane, and not in Simeon Hare. He had seen Dr. Dane himself, and watched him in his own house. He acknowledged Dr. Dane had behaved as a gentleman, and yet he could not bring himself to like him.

'I could not bear that you should never speak

to me again, Amy,' he said. 'Perhaps you are right, and this is a plot of Frank Dane's.'

'Now you are my own dear brother,' she said. 'Oswald——'

She hesitated, and he said :

'What were you going to say?'

'I really forget. It has slipped my memory all at once, so it could not be of much importance.'

She was about to tell him of the scene in the Art Gallery, but changed her mind suddenly, as she reflected it would only tend to increase his suspicions.

Amy Montrose was more influenced by her brother's conduct than she cared to acknowledge. In her room that night her reflections were again anything but pleasant.

Why did she dread her marriage-day? It seemed to her unnatural to do so. She loved Richard Dane with all her heart, and yet some unseen, unaccountable power dragged her back and bade her pause. Why did Frank Dane's dreadful malady take this form, and his cunning brain devise schemes to make his brother and herself unhappy?

It was a shame that Richard should be pursued in this manner. She would tell him of it. No, she could not do that. He might think she mistrusted him, and not for a moment would she permit a doubt to be in his mind.

Oswald Montrose also spent an hour or two in unpleasant reflections. He thought over all that had occurred since Dr. Dane arrived in Sydney.

There was nothing, he had to finally acknowledge, in Dr. Dane's conduct to justify the suspicions he had formed.

Finally, he arrived at the very unsatisfactory conclusion that it was his own personal prejudice against Dr. Dane that influenced him.

CHAPTER XV

'DR. DANE'S' WIFE.

IT was to be a quiet wedding, and Oswald Montrose was glad of it. Dr. Dane had been at Park House several times during the week, and even Oswald Montrose acknowledged most people would have approved of his sister's choice.

Frank Dane looked at his best on the wedding morning. No one would have conceived such a volcano was raging within him. His nerves were strung to the highest pitch, and he was more closely on his guard than ever.

He dressed carefully at his own house. He was to meet Amy at the church, and her brother was to give her away. A gentleman whose acquaintance he had formed on the voyage out readily consented to act as his best man.

Frank Dane was as pleased as Oswald Montrose that the wedding was to be quiet. He knew the bustle and excitement of a fashionable wedding would upset him.

James Fairton was also in a considerable state of excitement on this particular day. He wondered whether his position in the house would remain unchanged, and how Mrs. Dane would regard him.

Frank Dane was waiting at the church to receive Amy, when she arrived with her brother. There were four bridesmaids, and about a dozen intimate friends of the Montroses present.

The wedding ceremony was soon over, and Frank Dane and his wife went into the vestry to sign the register.

While they were in the vestry, a man entered the church in a hurried manner.

‘Where are you going?’ asked the verger.

‘Is the marriage ceremony over?’ he asked.

‘Yes. Were you invited?’

‘No.’

‘Then you’d better take a back-seat and keep quiet if you wish to see them go out. Here they come. Sit down there.’

And he pointed to a pew near the door.

‘Too late!’ murmured Simeon Hare.

For the famous detective had only just arrived in Sydney, and at once made his way to the church where he had heard from Reuben Short the marriage was to take place.

Simeon Hare sat well forward in his seat, so that he could obtain a good view of Frank Dane and his wife.

Frank Dane walked down the aisle with Amy

on his arm, and there was a strange light in his eyes.

Simeon Hare, as he looked at him intently, was so startled at the peculiar expression on Frank Dane's face that he could not repress a slight exclamation.

Frank Dane, who was close to him, heard it, and looked at Simeon Hare. He recognised the detective at once, and *knew* why he was there.

Frank Dane halted and looked at Simeon Hare.

Amy wondered at his stopping, and sought an explanation for it in his face. What she saw in her husband's expression terrified her.

With wild eyes, blazing with hatred, fear, and murderous intent combined, Frank Dane gazed as though stunned and bewildered into Simeon Hare's face.

The detective did not move a muscle, and he returned Frank Dane's look with a confident smile. He had made up his mind what to do. He would not create a scene in the church, out of respect for the feelings of the bride.

'How do you do, Dr. Dane?' he said. 'I congratulate you, I am sure. I trust you will be exceedingly happy.'

'Thank you,' said Frank Dane. 'Come along, Amy,' he said hurriedly. 'I will explain as we drive to Park House.'

The halt had been of such brief duration that it was scarcely noticeable.

Oswald Montrose, however, had seen Simeon

Hare, but not Frank Dane's face ; he concluded it must be some friend of Dr. Dane's, who had come to see the marriage ceremony. He looked hard at Simeon as he passed him.

'Oh, Richard,' said Amy, when they were in the carriage, 'who was that man? How terribly you looked at him! You quite frightened me. Do you know, it reminded me of that day in the Art Gallery.'

'Nonsense, Amy!' said Frank, in a tone of voice that hurt her feelings. 'That man is a dangerous fellow. The shock of seeing him here quite unnerved me. He is a man I once attended in London when he met with an accident. He is a London detective. His name is Simeon Hare.'

Amy gave an exclamation, in which surprise and a vague sense of fear were mingled.

'Whatever is the matter with you, Amy?' said Frank testily. 'You cannot have heard of Simeon Hare.'

'No ; that is—well, to tell you the truth, Richard, I have heard of him.'

'You!' said Frank Dane, in a tone of genuine surprise.

'Yes,' said Amy ; 'I ought to have told you before. I see it all now. It would have been far better to have told you.'

'Told me what, Amy?' he asked.

'That this man, Simeon Hare, is employed by Frank Dane to try and injure you, Richard. This man is here to try and prove you are Frank Dane.'

Oh, my love!' she said in a broken voice, 'this is a sad commencement of our wedded life. This man shall not harm you, Richard. I will prevent it. He shall know how a woman's love can baffle a detective's skill.'

'You ought to have informed me of all this before, Amy,' said Frank. 'I knew at once when I saw this man what he was here for. He was a friend of Frank's, and he is a man who will do anything to get money. Had you given me warning, Amy, I should not have been taken by surprise. Tell me all you know, if you have time.'

In a few brief words Amy gave Frank Dane particulars of the cablegrams.

'So Dr. Simpson is not to be bribed or cajoled to take part in this infamous plot,' he said. 'I knew he would be true to me.'

Then, as though a sudden impulse had dictated the question, he looked his wife in the face, and said:

'And you, Amy—you believe in me, do you not? You know your love tells you I am indeed Richard Dane, the man you loved so truly in years gone by, and I know love to-day.'

'Richard dearest, of course I believe in you. I love you now more than ever, because I believe you may be in danger,' said Amy fondly.

'My own wife,' said Frank Dane, as he kissed her fondly.

They had no time for further conversation. It was a strange drive from the church, and Amy

could not help thinking of it as they sat at the breakfast-table.

She was glad when the usual speech-making was over, and she retired to put on her travelling-dress. They were to catch the express for Melbourne, as they were to spend the honeymoon in the Victorian capital. Amy had never been to Melbourne, and she was anxious to see something of the large city and the colony.

Amy Dane looked charming in her travelling-dress, and when she came to say good-bye to her brother, they were both much affected.

'Write to me, Amy,' said Oswald; 'I shall be very anxious about you, dear. We have been so seldom parted during the last five years. I hope you will be very happy.'

'I am sure I shall, Oswald. You have been very good to me,' she sobbed. Then she controlled her feelings with an effort as she said: 'Richard will not like to see me with a sad face.'

They drove to the station accompanied by several of the guests, who wished to give them a parting cheer. Oswald Montrose was not one of the number. He could not bear to see his sister leave Sydney. When he had taken leave of Frank Dane, he said:

'Dr. Dane, I love my sister; she is very dear to me; I think I may trust you to make her happy.'

'You may,' said Frank Dane; 'she shall never forget the day she became my wife.'

'Strange words!' thought Oswald Montrose;

'but, then, to me he seems a strange man. I must hope for the best. I hope all will be well with her, but I have my doubts—I have my doubts,' he sighed.

The Melbourne express left Redfern Station at 5.15, and punctually to time the train moved off.

Frank Dane and his wife waved their adieus, in answer to the parting cheers, from the window of the Pullman car.

'That's over at last,' said Frank Dane. 'Now we are left to ourselves, Amy.'

She did not reply, and he saw the tears were stealing down her cheeks. The sight did not please him, but he kept his feelings in check.

'She's thinking of that brother of hers,' thought Frank.

Amy roused herself, and after chatting for half an hour, she felt her spirits revive.

After supper at Moss Vale, Amy retired to the ladies' compartment, and Frank Dane went into the vestibule to have a cigar.

He was not in a talkative mood, and when he had smoked his cigar half through, he flung it away and went to his berth. He could not sleep. The noise of the train irritated him, and jarred upon his nerves.

He thought of Simeon Hare, and what his coming to Sydney meant. Evidently his brother had found Simeon Hare a stanch friend, and one who believed in him.

When Frank Dane gave Dr. Simpson permission to allow Simeon Hare to see his brother, he was

firmly convinced the detective would not believe Richard's story.

Now Simeon Hare was in Sydney, and Frank knew it boded no good to him. He would have to be more on his guard than ever. The strain, he felt, would be more than he could bear. Wild thoughts came into his head as he slept in the Pullman-car on his wedding-night. He had got Amy. That was all he desired. Why not satisfy his passion for her, and then throw up the sponge?

The devil within him was tempting him again. Frank Dane knew he must struggle hard now. It would never do for him to break down in this place.

'She's yours—she's yours,' a voice within him seemed to say; 'take her to your arms. She is your bride, not Richard's. Do not let her slip from your grasp. Have your revenge. She is a madman's bride. She will taste of joys unknown. You can force her to your will. You can prey upon her mind. You can make her yours, body and soul. Drive her mad—drive her mad!' the fiend within him hissed.

Frank Dane tossed uneasily in his berth; he disturbed the man above him in the upper berth more than once. At last he leaned over, and said:

'Keep quiet, man! Are you drunk, or mad? What on earth are you raving and tossing about like this for?'

Frank Dane could have laughed aloud.

'Mad or drunk?'

'I'm both,' he thought. 'Mad enough, and

drunk with horrible fancies that haunt my brain. What have I done to be tortured like this? What can I do to escape from this devil within me?’

Then a soft, sweet voice seemed to answer him :

‘Save Amy—save her from yourself, and God will reward you.’

Frank Dane sat up and listened. He had never heard a voice like that before. It seemed like a sweet child’s voice—a message sent from heaven.

Then another voice cried aloud within him :

‘You cannot save her from yourself. You do not belong to yourself; you are mine. I am the spirit of evil, and I dwell within you. I am not to be conquered. You are mine, and she is mine through you.’

Again the soft, sweet voice murmured in the wretched man’s ears :

‘Cast him out; pray for deliverance; break your bonds; set yourself free; trust in God.’

The answer, in mocking tones, came back :

‘Trust in God! He cannot save you. You are mine. I have possessed you for years. You cannot be won back.’

Once more the sweet voice replied :

‘There is no madness in heaven; there is peace and rest there. Have faith. God can heal the mind as well as the body. He has power to cast out devils. Pray to God and save Amy.’

Exhausted with this fierce battle of thoughts within him, Frank Dane fell back and slept. He slept until the attendant roused him, shortly before Albury was reached.

Frank Dane sat up in his berth, and looked about him like a man in a dream. A change was coming over him. He murmured as he got up to dress :

‘ There is no madness in heaven ; there is peace and rest there. Have faith. God can heal the mind as well as the body. He has power to cast out devils. Pray to God and save Amy.’

It was the childlike voice he heard, and the devil within him was silent. There was no answering cry. It was a good omen for the day *and night*.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BRIDAL NIGHT.

A FRIEND of Oswald Montrose's had offered the use of his house at Armadale to the newly-married couple, and they went there from Spencer Street Station upon their arrival in Melbourne. This was another stroke of luck for Frank Dane ; he much preferred a private house to the publicity of a hotel.

The house at Armadale was one of those pretty bijou residences which abound in the suburbs of Melbourne, more especially in the direction of Toorak and Caulfield.

It was built on one floor, and had spacious verandas round it, and luxuriant foliage surrounded it, almost hiding the windows from view, and yet not obstructing the light.

Amy Dane was charmed with it ; everything looked homely and cheerful. It was much pleasanter to spend her honeymoon in a house to themselves, and surrounded with all the comforts of a family who evidently appreciated their home.

After luncheon they sat on the balcony in easy lounging chairs. The afternoon sun, blazing in all his splendour, cast a glow over the scene, and only a sound of an occasional train or carriage disturbed the quiet surrounding them.

Frank Dane seemed in a happier frame of mind than usual. As he looked at the wife he had won in such a daring, cunning way, he marvelled how he could have so safely accomplished his ends.

Amy looked charming, and she was determined on this, the first day of their wedded life, to do all in her power to fascinate her husband.

There was not the slightest suspicion in her mind that she had married Frank Dane instead of Richard. Had the real Dr. Dane appeared before her at that moment, and denounced her husband as an impostor, she would not have believed him. She would have pitied him, and firmly believed he was Frank Dane.

Amy's marriage with Frank Dane was the most

fatal thing that could possibly have happened to Richard Dane.

All now depended upon Frank's behaviour. It was only through some mad action on his part the discovery that he was Frank Dane could be made. As he sat looking at his wife, he thought he had never seen her so charming.

The madness in him was silenced for a time, and it was in his sober senses he commenced to contemplate, as he looked at his wife, the enormity of his offence against her, the cruel wrong he had done his brother.

He could not banish these thoughts. The picture of his brother Richard confined in the asylum was vividly before him. Everything in that room he had so long occupied at Dr. Simpson's he now called to mind. What was his unfortunate brother doing? Was he gradually losing his senses—becoming as mad as, or worse than the man who had usurped his place in the world?

Frank Dane shuddered as he thought of these things.

Amy looked at him lovingly, and said :

‘Are you unwell, Richard?’

‘No, Amy, not unwell; but I was thinking about Frank. It is an awful fate for a man to be shut up there for life. Only fancy if a mistake had been made—if he were not insane!’ he said.

‘There can be no doubt about it,’ said Amy. ‘He would never try to injure you if he were not insane. You have been so kind to him. Simeon

Hare's presence here is a sufficient proof he is mad. I detest that man. He must know the truth, and yet, for the sake of money, he would endeavour to ruin you, or, even worse, confine you in the asylum in your brother's place.'

'That would be an awful fate for a sane man, Amy! Have you ever thought what it would mean?' he asked.

'No,' said Amy. 'Do not talk of such things, Richard. Do not let any sign of impending trouble mar this, the first day of our married life alone together.'

'I will not, Amy,' said Frank Dane, drawing his chair nearer to her. 'Let us think of the future in a happier frame of mind. We must study together, Amy. You must not forget you promised to help me.'

'And I will, Richard,' she said; 'I will help you all I can—all that a woman may.'

'I know it,' he said. 'I am a fortunate man to have gained such a wife.'

The afternoon passed quickly, and the darkness chased the daylight away with a rapidity only known in such countries.

It was ten o'clock, and Amy Dane, with a faint flush in her face, said she felt rather tired and would retire.

Frank Dane got up from his chair and kissed her fondly.

'I will not say "good-night," love,' he said.

She left him, and went to their room.

Frank Dane sat down again with a troubled look on his handsome face. What was coming over him? He could not understand his present state of mind. He actually felt repentant, not revengeful. He pitied Amy and his brother Richard. He had accomplished all his cunning mind had schemed for, and now, when Amy was in his power, when the consummate point of revenge and desire was reached, he drew back.

Was he regaining his mental balance? He knew he was sane enough to argue with himself, to distinguish right from wrong. He almost wished the madness was upon him again, so that he could stifle his conscience. If he became of sound mind, he felt, he would suffer from a never-ending remorse for all he had done.

Then he thought Amy loved him. She had married Frank Dane, loving, as she thought, Richard Dane. But she had married a man she loved, therefore her love was for him—Frank Dane. And he possessed her—she was his. His brother had no power over her.

But the marriage was illegal; he had married her under a false name. Frank Dane had not married her, but Richard Dane; the register in which they had signed their names proved it.

For more than an hour Frank Dane sat thinking over his past life. Then he roused himself. Amy would wonder why he did not join her—she would think it strange.

He shuddered. Could he do her this awful

wrong in cold blood, as it were, with all his senses about him? It was an outrage he feared to perpetrate. Desire struggled with conscience, and the victory was uncertain.

What wrong would it be? No wrong. She was his wife, and she loved him. True, she loved him as Richard Dane. If he went to her room and confessed all, he knew she would not believe him.

He sat down again, and commenced to go over the incidents of his life. Suddenly he sprang to his feet; it seemed he had come to a decision. He looked at his watch—half-past eleven. He put out the light, and walked slowly to his room.

He hesitated when he reached the door, then he turned the handle and went in.

Amy Dane was sitting in a low chair in her wrapper. She turned her head as he entered, and smiled at him.

‘What have you been doing, Richard?’ she asked.

‘Thinking,’ he said, ‘of you.’

Then he came towards her, and she rose to meet him. In another moment they were clasped in each other's arms. He released her, took both her hands in his own, and looked into her face. That momentary embrace had almost sealed her fate.

Frank Dane was in his sober senses, and he was really in love with his wife. The woman he had married to wreak his revenge upon he now loved. At this moment she was his own. He would not part with her; she loved him, and that sufficed.

‘Amy,’ he said, ‘you will never cease to love me?’

‘No, Richard,’ she replied, as she nestled near him, ‘never.’

‘But suppose it was proved to the satisfaction of everyone that I was Frank Dane, and not Richard Dane?’ he said.

‘I should not believe it,’ she replied.

‘Suppose I told you I was Frank Dane?’ he said hoarsely.

‘I would not believe *you*,’ she said. ‘But why ask me such questions? Are you trying to test my love for you?’

‘Yes,’ he said. ‘In future years strange things may happen, Amy. Will you promise me one thing?’

‘What is it, Richard?’ she asked.

‘Promise me that, whatever happens, you will love me for myself—for what I am to you now—and that no one shall ever convince you I am not the man you have loved ever since the engagement began,’ he said.

‘I can readily promise that,’ she said. ‘No one can shatter my faith and trust in you. I do not believe you could do it yourself.’

‘Am.,’ he said quietly, ‘sometimes I have strange fancies. Sometimes I am not altogether in my right mind. Will you help me to overcome these fancies, to struggle against them?’

She was somewhat alarmed at his words. She had noticed he acted strangely at times.

'Dear Richard, you are of a very sensitive nature. You have a vivid imagination, but you must not tell me you are not always in your right mind. I know better. You are overworked, and your brain needs rest. I ought not to have urged you to resume your practice so soon,' she said.

'You are an angel, Amy,' he answered. 'I do love you. Yes, Amy, I love you, and no one shall ever take you from me,' he said fiercely.

His passions were roused ; there was a gleam in his eyes. He caught her by the waist, he pressed her to him in a fierce caress, and as his lips met hers in a long kiss a soft voice seemed to whisper in his ears :

'Save Amy. Save her from yourself, and God will reward you !'

His grasp relaxed, he drew back from her, and, much to Amy's surprise and alarm, he sank into her seat with a sob and groan.

In a moment she was on her knees beside him. She had her arms round his neck, and drew his head slowly down until it rested on her bosom.

'My Richard !' she murmured. 'What is it, dearest ? What troubles you ? Tell me, Richard. If you have anything on your mind, tell me—I am your wife—let me share your secrets if you have any.'

He recovered himself, and, looking up into her face, said :

'You are a good woman, Amy. I am not fit to be near you. My touch will contaminate you.

This is a strange bridal night, Amy,' he added, and laughed bitterly.

All thought of herself had vanished, and Amy Dane strove to pacify him. She could not understand his mood, but she never doubted him.

'She is yours—take her!' whispered a mocking voice.

He was on the verge of madness again, and he knew it.

Amy Dane little knew the peril she was in. Had she done so, even her brave heart would have quailed.

'There is no madness in heaven,' came the soft, childish voice again. 'Save Amy from yourself.'

Frank Dane rose and paced the room. Amy watched him; she could not understand his strange actions. Suddenly he stopped in front of the washstand. He took the water-jug, and emptied the contents into the basin. Then he looked in the water intently for some minutes. His nervous system was thoroughly unstrung. The fight he had been engaged in with his madness during the past weeks had been a terrible strain.

As he looked in the water, he fancied he saw the vision the old witch-woman had called up in that desolate, dreary hut at Colombo. This time he saw in his fancy the same face, the struggle, the cloth removed from the head, the marks of the rope, and the signs of strangulation. In another second he would have dashed the bowl

to pieces. The sweet, soft voice, however, he heard again.

'See,' it seemed to say, 'you have overcome the devil within you. He is dead; he lies before you. You have done well. God can cast out devils. Remember your wife.'

Amy had looked on in amazement; she felt frightened at first. She feared it might be as her brother thought, and that the taint of insanity was in the blood of both brothers. Then her love conquered her, and she only felt pain and sorrow for the trouble her husband was in. He needed rest; his brain was too active. She must help him and soothe him. She approached him and put her hand on his arm.

He turned and looked at her sweet, sympathetic face; he saw her eyes full of a loving kindness for him. The face of a good woman exercises power over the better part of a man. Amy's face soothed Frank Dane's troubled mind; he grew calmer as he looked at her.

She led him gently towards the bed. He made no resistance. She took off his coat and unfastened his collar; she pushed him gently down, and lifted up his feet.

Frank Dane seemed like a man in a dream.

She made the pillows comfortable under his aching head; she put her cool white hand on his fevered brow. She bent down and kissed him, and folded her arms round his neck.

'You must rest a little,' she said softly.

The voice sounded to him like the one he heard a few minutes ago.

Frank Dane slept, and his wife watched him with a troubled, loving, pitying face. Then she drew her chair to the bedside and sat down. She meant, if possible, to snatch a few moments' rest, in order to have strength for the next day. She felt her husband might not have quite recovered himself, and that he would need her help. It was a strange bridal night, as Frank Dane had said.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN THE DOMAIN.

NEXT morning Frank Dane was better. He had passed a quiet night, and felt refreshed. Amy watched by his side until she dozed in the chair. Towards morning she had taken a rest.

Frank Dane's manner to his wife was caressing, and he could not bear her out of his sight. He seemed to rely upon her. Amy, to a certain extent, felt this, and was proud of it.

Their honeymoon lasted a fortnight, and during the time Frank Dane had not once referred to the curious nature of that first night. Amy Dane often thought about it, but forbore to question him. As he seemed to have almost forgotten it, she did not wish to revive the recollection.

Her husband puzzled her; she could not under-

stand his manner altogether. That he loved her deeply she was sure, but his love had changed from passion to tender regard.

Frank Dane felt he had in some extraordinary way recovered his mental balance. The change of scene, the new life he was leading, had all worked wonders in him. The mad fancies that possessed him had gone, he hoped never to return; but in their place had come a deep remorse. With a great effort he had mastered his passion for Amy; his desire to possess her wholly had vanished, and his love for her was now of a purer nature. If his present frame of mind continued, he felt it would lead to some strange and sudden resolution on his part.

Amy Dane was glad when they were settled in their own house in College Street, Sydney. She went about her household duties with a glad heart, for her husband was all she had imagined him; nay more, he went beyond her expectations.

Oswald Montrose was pleased to note the change in his brother-in-law, and also to see Amy so happy. He had, during their absence in Melbourne, seen Simcon Hare, who had been introduced to him by Reuben Short.

Simcon's account of Richard Dane's detention in the asylum was plain and straightforward. He asked Oswald Montrose to assist him in securing Frank Dane.

During the time Dr. Dane and Amy were in Melbourne, Oswald Montrose had suffered. He

hardly knew what to think or how to act. His great fear was that harm might befall Amy in Melbourne; but when she returned looking so bright and happy, he was much relieved. The more he saw of Dr. Dane since his marriage, the better Oswald Montrose liked him.

Frank Dane had changed, and no one knew it better than himself; but the nature of the change was known to him alone.

Simeon Hare felt completely nonplussed when Oswald Montrose said he was of Reuben Short's opinion, that Simeon had made a mistake, and that the true Frank Dane was still in the asylum.

'I had my doubts at one time,' said Oswald; 'but from what I have seen of Dr. Dane since his marriage, they have been dispelled. I think, Hare, if I were you, I should take no further steps in the matter. I believe you are quite disinterested, and free from all desire to make money out of this case; but at the same time I think you acted hastily in coming out here with such a slender clue in your possession.'

'Mr. Montrose,' said Simeon Hare, 'I see I shall have to fight this game alone. It will not be the first time I have gone single-handed, and, as my friend Short knows, come out on the right side.'

'Then, you do not give up hope of proving that Dr. Dane is Frank Dane and insane?' asked Oswald.

'No, I do not,' said Simeon. 'It is a very difficult job, but I mean to see it through.'

Some time after the return of Dr. Dane and his wife, Simeon Hare was sauntering in the Domain, round by Lady Macquarie's Chair.

He was dissatisfied with himself, and with the world at large. He wondered how Richard Dane was bearing his long silence, and whether he had heard of his brother's marriage to Amy Montrose. The shock of that news, Simeon Hare feared, might indeed drive Richard Dane mad.

As he ruminated over the very unsatisfactory state of affairs, as they at present stood, he chanced to look up, and saw Frank Dane coming towards him.

Frank was a great walker, and through the gardens and round by the chair was a favourite stroll of his, and handy to his residence in College Street.

Frank Dane saw Simeon Hare, and also at the same time saw there was no chance of avoiding him. He would willingly have gone a dozen miles out of his way to avoid such a meeting, but it was not to be.

He resolved to make the best of it, and walking up to Simeon Hare, he said, as he held out his hand :

‘ Good-morning, Mr. Hare. I was rather startled when I met you so suddenly in the church after my marriage. You must pardon me if my behaviour seemed strange ; you were one of the last men I expected to see at my wedding.’

‘ I have no doubt you were surprised to see me,’ said Simeon Hare.

‘What has brought you to Australia?’ said Frank Dane.

‘I think you know,’ replied Simeon.

‘I have not the faintest idea,’ said Frank Dane, ‘unless you come from my brother Frank.’

‘I do come from your brother,’ said Simeon Hare—‘the brother you have so cruelly wronged. I come, Frank Dane, to try and force you to confess the truth, and to release your brother, Dr. Richard Dane.’

Frank Dane smiled, but there was a dangerous gleam in his eyes.

Simeon Hare was taking a wrong course with his man. Had the detective known Frank Dane’s state of mind, he would not have threatened, but rather argued with him, and tried to lead him through his conscience to put matters right as far as he was able.

Simeon Hare, however, thought he had a cunning madman to deal with, and acted accordingly.

‘Mr. Hare, you are labouring under some strange delusion,’ said Frank. ‘I am Richard Dane. What has caused you to make such an extraordinary mistake?’

‘It is no mistake,’ said Simeon Hare, ‘and you know it. You have robbed your brother, ruined his practice, condemned him to a living death, stolen the girl he loved, deceived her, and ruined her for life——’

‘Stop, man!’ thundered Frank Dane. ‘You do not know what you are saying.’

'I do,' said Simeon Hare, after a pause. 'Let me tell you that Richard Dane is being driven mad. He is being tortured daily, hourly, and through you. He is living a life of misery. It is hell upon earth to him. You know what it is like to a madman. Frank Dane, think what it must be to your brother Richard.'

Frank Dane would have passed on, but Simeon Hare detained him.

'Listen to me,' he said. 'It will be better for you. I will catch you tripping as sure as you are alive. I will never leave you unwatched. You shall not know when you are free from observation. Each patient you visit may be a spy in my pay, shamming illness in order to trap you. Ah! you start, and well you may, Frank Dane. I have no proofs, but I must make them. You shall make them for me. I will show you no pity, no mercy. Already there is a whisper in the city against you, that you are not the man you profess to be, that your title to doctor is not as firmly established as it might be. That whisper shall grow until notice must be taken of it. Think, man, what you are doing. If you married Amy Montrose because you loved her, think what it will mean to her. Bah! what am I saying?' said Simeon Hare in a lower tone, half to himself. 'I am wasting breath on this madman.'

Frank Dane gripped Simeon Hare by the arm. At first the detective feared violence, but a glance at Frank Dane's face dispelled the idea.

There was a look in Frank Dane's face that made Simeon Hare 'feel queer,' as he afterwards described his sensations to Reuben Short.

'You are not wasting your breath on a madman,' said Frank Dane. 'I am sane now, whatever I may have been a year ago ; but if you do all you have threatened, I shall lose my reason again, and then, Simeon Hare, you will have to beware.'

'Then, you acknowledge you are Frank Dane?' said Simeon.

'I am Dr. Dane,' said Frank. 'Listen to me, now, for one moment,' he went on. 'I have told you the truth. I know I am a sane man. Never mind how I know it, but let it suffice that such is the case.'

'He's worse than ever,' thought Simeon.

'I love my wife as no man ever loved before. In my mad rage I thought I hated her, and married her for revenge. That marriage and my love for her have brought back my reason. You may not believe me, but it is the truth. Treat me as a sane man, Simeon Hare, and give me time for reflection. Come what may, I will never give up my wife ; she loves me. Do you hear, man? She loves me for myself, not for the sake of any other man. She believes in me, and no living soul will ever convince her I am other than the man she has always loved. Place my brother before her now, and I swear to you, Simeon Hare, she will remain true and faithful to me. Let her learn the truth, and she will yet be true to me.'

'Then, you acknowledge you are Frank Dane,' asked Simeon again.

'You need no acknowledgment of mine,' said Frank Dane. 'You can do nothing. You are powerless. If you raise the breath of scandal against me, I will face it; I will even demand a public inquiry. Let me alone, Simeon Hare. I am not mad, and I will repair the injury I did when I was not responsible for my actions. One thing, however, I will not do: I will never part with my wife unless' — he hesitated — 'unless she chooses of her own free will to give me up,' he added.

Simeon Hare knew these were not the words of a madman, but Frank Dane had been described to him as such an extraordinary man that he still believed he was not wholly sane. Frank Dane's words, however, made the detective change his tactics. 'I must work upon his conscience,' thought Simeon. 'I will pretend to believe him.'

'And if your wife decides to leave you,' said Simeon, 'you will make no objections?'

'None,' said Frank Dane sadly. 'I shall not live to make objections.'

'What do you mean?' said Simeon.

'I mean that I will not live without the woman I love. I was mad with hate when I led her to the altar. I was mad with love the day after we were married. I am sane now, and her love to me is more than anything in the world,' said Frank Dane passionately.

‘More than rendering justice to your brother?’ asked Simeon Hare.

‘At present, yes,’ said Frank Dane.

Simeon Hare was struck with his answer.

‘If I promise to make no move, will you give me your word you will do all in your power to set your brother free?’ he said.

‘Yes,’ said Frank Dane. ‘But surely you will not take the word of a madman?’ he added with a faint smile.

‘I’ll take your word, mad or sane,’ said Simeon Hare. ‘Something tells me it will be the best plan.’

‘It is the only plan,’ said Frank Dane. ‘My mind is gradually developing, and will soon be in the condition it was before I became insane. If you force me to defend myself, and drive me to despair by adopting harsh measures against me, my mind will probably go off the balance again. Your only hope is to let my sense of right outweigh my inclination to do wrong. If you knew what I have suffered, you would even pity me—ay, more than the man you are here to fight for.’

‘I doubt that,’ said Simeon. ‘It is a terribly painful affair, look at it which way you will.’

‘Then, I can trust you not to take further steps at present?’ said Frank.

‘I’ll give you a month,’ said Simeon. ‘Longer I cannot give.’

‘That will do,’ said Frank. ‘Call at my house this day month.’

'I will,' said Simeon, as he made an entry in his notebook.

The two men parted. Frank Dane watched Simeon Hare until he disappeared.

'How will it all end?' he murmured to himself. 'Come what will, I can never live without Amy. She is my life, without her I should die.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

RICHARD DANE'S LETTER.

It is necessary to leave Frank Dane and his wife for a time in order to see how Richard Dane fared since his interview with Simeon Hare.

That interview had given the unfortunate Dr. Dane some hope. He knew he could trust the detective, and had faith in his abilities. But when week after week went by and he received no news, his heart failed him.

At first he imagined Dr. Simpson detained the letters, but after several conversations with him he found such was not the case. From weeks it went on to months, and still there was no news. Then Dr. Dane became a prey to the bitterest reflections. His thoughts were no fit companions for any sane man situated as Richard Dane was.

Dr. Simpson noticed the change in him, and could not account for it. His patient had been quiet and rational for some weeks after the de-

tective's visit, but now he was again morose and irritable.

A letter from Australia came, addressed to 'Frank Dane,' and Dr. Simpson recognised the handwriting. He did not open it, but took it himself to Richard Dane.

'Here's a letter from your brother,' he said. 'I hope he has some good news for you.'

Dr. Dane sprang to his feet and eagerly seized the letter. He was so excited he could not open it. He wished to be free from observation when he read it.

Dr. Simpson left the room, and Dr. Dane commenced to tear the envelope with trembling fingers. He instinctively felt Frank Dane would not write to tell him good news, but to goad him to desperation. Perhaps it would be better for him not to read the letter—his brother's mad brain devised such cunning, subtle tortures.

He could not, however, resist reading it. At all events, it would tell him the worst news, if it gave no ray of hope. He read the letter slowly, and as he proceeded his eyes dilated with horror, his brain reeled, and his senses seemed to desert him.

It was an awful letter, a confession of a madman, and in it Frank Dane had for once forgotten his cunning and regard for his safety, and had written down his thoughts as they emanated from his brain. In it Frank Dane gloated in the most horrible manner over his possession of Amy Montrose, and described to his wretched brother

the fearful degradations he would subject her to. He openly confessed it was his intention to drive her insane, and then to confine her as he had been confined.

It will be remembered Frank Dane wrote this letter in his own house in College Street the first night he slept there, and how he gloated over it with a maniac's glee. Having written the letter and posted it, he forgot all about it ; and had he been questioned at the moment Richard Dane was reading it, he would have denied in all honesty he had written it.

Dr. Dane, however, held the terrible missive in his trembling hand. The date of the marriage was mentioned, so he knew Amy must have been in Frank's power some time.

An awful picture of what she had endured was presented to his mind. He saw the woman he loved struggling in the brutal, lustful arms of a madman, whose passion was intensified by hate, whose insane fancies would suggest the most degrading indignities.

He fancied he heard Frank's exulting laugh and mad delight as he told Amy what her doom was to be. He remembered his brother's words about children born of such a marriage, and at this horrible thought Dr. Dane's brain reeled. He gave a piercing, heart-rending cry, and fell heavily on the floor insensible.

It was a mercy insensibility came to him as it did, otherwise he must have gone mad.

Dr. Simpson heard the cry, and it startled him. It rang through the house, and made even the poor unfortunate inmates shudder. It even sent a cold thrill through Dr. Simpson, used as he was to hear all sorts of wild, weird cries.

'That's Frank Dane,' he said. 'Good God! what an awful cry! What can have happened?'

He rushed to the room, and found Mason, the attendant, bending over Dr. Dane's prostrate body.

'What is it, Mason?' asked Dr. Simpson. 'Is he hurt in any way?'

'Yes, sir,' said Mason. 'He's had a nasty fall. His head struck the corner of the table, and he is quite insensible. What a fearful cry he gave!'

'There must have been some cause for that,' said Dr. Simpson. 'He had a terrible fright, or he would never have called out like that.'

Dr. Dane was put to bed, and Dr. Simpson sent for another medical man to attend him. This was his invariable custom when any of his patients were seriously ill.

For many hours Dr. Dane lay insensible. It was the best thing that could have happened for him. When he came round he was delirious, and brain-fever threatened.

Mason was left in charge of him, and Dr. Simpson determined to try and find out what had caused the shock.

He went to Dr. Dane's room, and almost the

first thing he saw was the letter on the floor. Dr. Simpson picked it up, and commenced to read it. As he mastered the contents his face showed his surprise and horror. It was a very similar expression to that in Dr. Dane's face as he read it.

Dr. Simpson knew no sane man could have written such a letter. Even if a man in his right mind could have conceived such fearful ideas, he would never have put them on paper. But the final shock was to Dr. Simpson the most startling and terrible of all.

He read the letter to the end, and there in big, bold letters, in a hand there was no mistaking, a signature he had seen scores of times, he saw the name of

‘FRANK DANE.’

For once in his mad delight at the success of all his plans, Frank Dane had forgotten himself, and had signed his own name to this awful letter.

Dr. Simpson doubted no longer. The man he had in his charge, he felt now, must indeed be Dr. Richard Dane.

As the terrible nature of the mistake that had been made came home to him, Dr. Simpson bowed his head on his hands, and groaned in his misery. He had not a thought of himself, or his reputation, or even of the danger he might be in for the mistake he had made; all his pity and misery was for Dr. Dane and his sufferings.

Dr. Simpson could not be blamed for what he had done, he would not be blamed when the true facts of the case were made known; but he felt he could never forgive himself for the wrong he had unintentionally done Dr. Dane.

The next two weeks were to Dr. Simpson the most miserable he had ever spent.

In his ravings, Dr. Dane proved his identity clearly.

Dr. Simpson explained matters to the two medical men attending Richard Dane, and they were amazed at the extraordinary nature of the case.

Dr. Dane hovered between life and death for over three weeks. The doctors feared for his senses, the shock had been so terrible. This could be realized from the contents of Frank Dane's letter, which they read with horror.

'Poor fellow! What an awful shock to him. It was a mercy he fell down and became insensible before his mind was unhinged, as it most assuredly would have been. No man with any sensitive feelings about him could withstand such a shock,' said one of the doctors.

At last Richard Dane took a turn for the better, and Dr. Simpson watched his recovery, which was slow and tedious, with intense relief, but also with remorse and grief visible in every line of his face.

Then came the time when he told Richard Dane what he had discovered.

'I have learned everything,' he said in a broken

voice; 'I read that letter written by Frank Dane. I sat by your bed and heard your cries for mercy, your heart-rending appeals to God to save Amy Montrose from your brother. I heard your appeals to me to release you. I knew the agony you were in, and it tortured me. Dr. Dane, can you ever forgive me? This fatal mistake will embitter my whole life. I shall never be the same man again. You have suffered much, believe me; my remorse in the future will be more than I can bear.'

Richard Dane smiled faintly, and held out his thin, pale hand. He clasped Dr. Simpson's in it, and said:

'Forgive you! Yes, I readily forgive you, Simpson. It has not been your fault. I will not pretend you have done me no wrong, but I acquit you of all intention to do so. That I know you are incapable of. This fatal likeness between Frank and myself has been the cause of all this misery. Frank, we know, is not responsible for his actions, but it is terrible to think what he may have done. Surely God would never permit him to injure an innocent woman in the awful manner he contemplated.'

A day or two after Dr. Simpson had his conversation with Richard Dane, a cablegram arrived from Simeon Hare to Frank Dane.

'You see, he keeps up the deception in order to be friendly with you,' said Richard Dane to Dr. Simpson.

The intelligence conveyed by the message caused Dr. Dane intense relief. At all events, Amy was alive and well, and did not seem to have suffered.

It was, however, a great grief to him to know she was with his brother. She must in time learn the truth, even if she did not know it now.

He wondered how Amy could have been so deceived by Frank. Surely the eyes of love could have detected the change. True, they had not met for over five years, but even in that time no great change would have taken place.

Another thought haunted him, and caused him intense pain and grief.

What if Amy actually loved Frank! He had wooed her as Richard Dane, but she might love his brother for himself. In such a case, even when she learned the truth, she might still cling to Frank Dane.

Richard Dane was determined to go out to Sydney as soon as he was able to travel.

Dr. Simpson had promised to advance him all the money he required, and he had in hand a considerable sum left him by Frank Dane before his departure.

How he should act when he arrived there he had not determined. He must consult Simeon Hare, and obtain full possession of the facts. On one point he was determined: he must rescue Amy from Frank's clutches before any harm came to her. If necessary, he would force his brother to leave her.

Richard Dane thought, when his brother found he was a free man and in Sydney, he would retire from the contest and yield his rightful place to him.

Things were, however, to turn out very differently from what Richard Dane anticipated.

CHAPTER XIX.

A DISCUSSION.

IN total ignorance of any change in the position of his brother Richard, Frank Dane continued his work in Sydney, and grew to love his wife more and more as each day went by.

Although she did not know it, Amy's influence over him was paramount.

It was her womanly kindness and love that won Frank Dane back from madness to sanity.

Her tender care of him, and her endeavour to make life pleasant to him, increased Frank Dane's remorse.

As he gradually grew stronger in mind and body, many of the horrible fancies that possessed him in former days were utterly forgotten.

The weird scene at Colombo, the struggle in his cabin, his conduct in the Art Gallery, his terrible letter to Richard Dane, were blotted out of his memory.

'Clothed, and in his right mind,' Frank Dane

was a totally different being to the man Amy married.

As he grew calmer and more responsible for his actions, Frank Dane commenced to take great interest in the treatment and cure of insane persons.

He studied the complex nature of strange cases, and endeavoured to rescue the unfortunates from the realms of madness in which they dwelt.

Amy naturally thought the affliction under which 'his brother' suffered caused him to make this his favourite study.

Frank Dane was, however, at the same time studying himself. He felt he had, to a certain extent, been born again, and that now he was sane he could study himself when insane, and analyze his own case thoroughly.

It was a strange sight to see the sane man studying his own insanity, and arguing the points that arose with himself. Amy joined him in these discussions sometimes. She wondered at his grasp of such cases, his peculiar knowledge of various phases of lunacy, but not for a moment did it dawn upon her that her husband was discussing his own case.

'You must have had great experience in these cases, Richard,' she said to him one day when they were talking the matter over; 'you seem to know what these poor people suffer, and how terrible the struggles are they undergo with their madness.'

'I do not think any medical man has studied

insanity more closely than I have, Amy. I never told you before, but I lived with one of the most cunning insane men for some time,' he said.

'Were you not afraid?' asked Amy.

'At times, yes,' said Frank. 'The bravest men often feel fear. The man without fear is not as brave as the man who acknowledges danger and faces it from a sense of duty. When a man cannot see danger there is no credit in facing it; he has nothing to overcome. The man who fears a danger and faces it without flinching is the braver man.'

'I think you are right,' said Amy. 'To be brave is to possess a noble courage, which does not imply a man is without fear.'

'A madman is entitled to be called brave,' said Frank, 'if we acknowledge bravery in a man without fear. I have known a madman to perform heroic acts, but at the same time his heroism was caused through fearlessness—he knew no fear, he did not see the danger he ran. In a battle the bravest soldiers are the men who face death, knowing they may be killed at any moment, and fearing to be shot down. It is from a heroic sense of duty such men face death.'

'And so it is in the battle of life,' said Amy; 'I place duty and honour first, Richard.'

Frank Dane was silent for a moment, then he said:

'The man I lived with, Amy, was my brother Frank. I knew he was insane long before it was suspected. I watched him carefully. I saw the

awful struggles he had with the demon within him. He feared that demon, and fought against it.'

'That was bravery,' said Amy.

She little thought her husband was discussing himself, analyzing his own insane condition, the mental state he was in a few months ago.

'It may be called bravery, Amy, I think,' said Frank, 'because I know, as well as though I had undergone the struggle myself, how terrible the fight was between sanity and insanity. In Frank Dane there were two men—a sane man and a madman. The sane man feared the madman, the madman feared the sane man, but could not thoroughly analyze his fear. These two men in the one man were constantly at war, and, in the end, insanity won. It often strikes me, Amy, there may come a time when the sane man will conquer the madman in Frank.'

'I should rejoice to see it,' said Amy. 'How pleasant it would be to have Frank here in his proper mind! Do you know, Richard,' she said, with a slight blush, 'I think I commenced to love you by loving Frank first. Strange, is it not?'

Frank Dane had some difficulty in concealing his agitation at this announcement. It was new to him. In his mad way he had fancied, at one time, Amy encouraged him.

'Are you sure of this, Amy?' he asked.

'I was attracted by Frank in the first place, Richard, but when I knew his frame of mind I felt it would be wrong to encourage him. Then, when

I saw how kind and thoughtful you were for him, and how you pitied him, I think I commenced to love you for it, Richard,' said Amy.

'Then it was actually through Frank, you commenced to love me?' said her husband, and he thought what a strange fate it was that had brought them together.

It was a curious situation—Amy imagining her husband was Richard Dane, yet actually discussing Frank Dane with himself.

'Yes, I think it was through Frank I came to love you, Richard,' she said, answering his question.

'Should you like Frank to be here?' he asked. 'You know he tried to part us. Even now Simeon Hare is here, engaged to prove I am Frank Dane, and not Richard Dane. Supposing he did prove it to the satisfaction of a court of justice, what should you do then, Amy?'

'How can you ask, Richard?' she said. 'If such a terrible calamity befell you, I should love you even more than I do now. Duty and love would bind me to you. In your adversity I should know you had more need of me.'

As Amy thought of this possibility, she became more earnest, and spoke with a depth of feeling impossible to misunderstand.

'I should never cease to work for you, Richard, to try and regain your liberty. Strange misfortunes do overcome men and women. We never can tell what may happen. This man Simeon Hare is a

clever detective, and, I suppose, unscrupulous. He shall not harm you, Richard, if I can protect you. Even if he proved you were Frank Dane I should not believe it. How could I believe it? Even if such an utter impossibility were to happen, and you were transformed into Frank Dane, and not Richard Dane, it would be the same. *You* are the man I love, the man I have married, and it is you I shall love, and no other man, until the grave divides us.'

Frank Dane rose to his feet, trembling in every limb. Amy's words had fired every nerve in his body. She loved him for himself. His brother could not part them.

He came over to Amy and kissed her fondly, murmuring words of tenderest endearment. This was the happiest moment of his life. He meant to enjoy it to the full, for he felt the future lay dark before him.

'You have great faith in me, Amy,' he said. 'Surely never man had a more loving, trusting wife.'

That night, as he sat alone in his study, Frank Dane was racked with doubts and fears. His duty lay plain before him. He must give up his position, he must free his brother, and restore him his patrimony. All this he would do willingly, freely. He would make the fullest atonement possible. But when it came to surrendering Amy his soul revolted at the mere thought.

Hand over Amy to his brother Richard! Never!

Had she not said, even if he were Frank Dane, she could not love another man until the grave parted them.

'Until the grave parted them,' murmured Frank Dane.

He might solve the problem that way. He might leave Amy free, and let Richard step into his place. That would be an easy solution of the difficulty. But could he do it? Could he deliberately put himself away? He was just tasting happiness: he had overcome his madness, and was once more a sane man. With Amy, there might yet be a career open to him in another land. Without her he did not care to live.

He might send for his brother, and let Amy choose between them. He would confess his wrong-doing, and crave her pardon and his brother's. That would not be fair to Richard. To give his brother his own again, it would be necessary for him (Frank) to entirely disappear and leave Amy behind. He argued that Amy loved him, and had said, even if he were Frank Dane indeed, she could love no other man.

'Unless parted by the grave,' said Frank.

That appeared to be the only solution of the difficulty. Had it come to this, that he must kill himself at the very moment he had reached the height of happiness?

His own feelings obliterated somewhat the sense of wrong he had done his brother Richard. He commenced to make excuses for his conduct,

arguing that he was mad at the time, and therefore not responsible for his actions.

‘But you are not mad now,’ said a voice within him. ‘God has restored your senses. What has He restored you to your right mind for? To further injure your brother? No. To make reparation—to expiate your cruel wrong to him. You must restore all to your brother, even the woman you love, and who is not lawfully your wife. No half-measures will recompense for the injuries inflicted. There must be full and complete atonement.’

Frank Dane tried to stifle his conscience, but it would not be crushed down. He was not a bad man, but a most unfortunate man—a man to be pitied, not condemned.

Had he been in his right mind when he first met Amy Montrose, she would in all probability have never loved his brother Richard. She had confessed this to him (Frank), thinking he was Richard Dane.

This, then, was the truth. Amy loved him, or would have loved him first, had he been of sound mind. He was of sound mind now, and she loved him; therefore he had every right to her. But he had obtained her love by fraud and cruel wrong. He had married her for revenge, not in a spirit of love.

By a wonderful dispensation of Providence, he had been saved from inflicting upon Amy the most terrible wrong of all.

Frank Dane in his sober senses had but a faint idea of what he had contemplated when he married Amy. He would have been as much horrified at reading the letter he had written to Richard Dane as Dr. Dane was himself.

The idea that he had ever contemplated such a fearful revenge upon the woman he now loved would have terrified him.

As the days went by, and the time wore on when Simeon Hare was to call for his answer and decision, Frank Dane became more and more restless and depressed. He could not make up his mind what course to adopt. He knew what was right, and what he ought to do, but he could not bring himself to resign Amy.

He tried to conceal his trouble from Amy, but she saw there was something wrong with him.

She did not worry him with ceaseless questioning, but she determined to wait and watch, and do all in her power to help him.

CHAPTER XX.

RICHARD DANE'S ARRIVAL.

DR. SIMPSON did all in his power to make amends for the wrong Dr. Dane had suffered. He helped him in every possible way. Dr. Dane regained his strength more rapidly than was expected.

When he was well enough to consult his lawyer he sent for him, and that worthy man, when he

heard the extraordinary story related by Dr. Dane, and corroborated by Dr. Simpson, felt he had made a decided hash of his client's affairs.

There was, however, a chance of saving the greater portion of Dr. Dane's money, as Frank Dane left the lawyer to settle all the affairs that could not be wound up in the brief time he had given him.

The astonished lawyer promised to do his best. It was, however, a considerable time before he could fully realize that Frank Dane had imposed upon him, and successfully passed himself off as Dr. Dane.

Richard Dane thought it best not to make publicly known what had taken place. A few of his most intimate friends saw him, but they kept the secret well. It did not even find its way into the newspapers.

Dr. Simpson went to Tilbury to see Dr. Dane sail for Sydney, and wished him Godspeed.

Richard Dane had sent no word of his coming to Sydney. He thought it best not to do so. He soon found out Simeon Hare's address, and called upon him. He had altered very much since his confinement in the asylum and his illness, but the resemblance between the brothers was still most extraordinary.

Simeon Hare at first mistook him for Frank Dane.

'So you have called on me, Mr. Dane,' he said, 'instead of waiting until I paid you a visit. I hope you have come to a proper decision.'

Dr. Dane smiled as he said, holding out his hand :

‘Don’t you know *me*, Simeon?’

‘Good heavens, Dr. Dane!’ said the detective in amazement, and heartily wringing Richard’s hand. ‘How on earth have you got here? This beats all! It is a stroke of luck. Sit down and tell me all about it.’

Dr. Dane told Simeon Hare the story the reader is familiar with. As he unfolded his tale the detective was lost in wonder, and when he read the letter Frank Dane had written, he saw what an awful shock it must have been to the man before him.

‘Your brother has altered strangely since he wrote that letter,’ said Simeon. ‘I think he has, to a certain extent, recovered his senses. One thing there can be no mistake about: he is passionately fond of his wife, and she is very happy with him. I have found this out from James Fairton, his servant, who says he never saw a more loving couple.’

Dr. Dane sighed, and looked troubled.

‘If Frank is sane, and Amy loves him, how am I to win her back?’ he asked.

‘That is a matter requiring much consideration,’ said Simeon. ‘I am to call at your brother’s house next week to hear his decision. He is perfectly aware I know who he is, and does not deny to me he is Frank Dane.’

Simeon Hare then went on to give Dr. Dane

a full account of all that took place when he met Frank Dane in the Domain.

'This is not the conduct of an insane man,' said Richard Dane. 'His hatred of Amy must have turned to love. I do not wonder at it. She is a woman calculated to charm even such a man as my brother. I am afraid, Simeon, it will be a hard matter to win Amy, even if Frank consents to disappear. He has done me an even greater injury than I imagined. The loss of Amy's love will be to me irreparable wrong.'

'I think,' said Simeon, 'it will be better for you to remain quiet until I have seen your brother and heard what he has to say. If you were to see him yourself, it might upset any plans he had formed; it might even prove dangerous to his wife. The thought of losing her might unhinge his mind again, and then he would almost certainly do her an injury. Let me see him as arranged. If he has not decided to make you every reparation in his power, even to surrendering the woman he has deceived, I will tell him you are here and demand justice at his hands.'

'I leave it with you,' said Dr. Dane. 'I am entirely in your hands, Simeon. Do not be too harsh with Frank. Poor fellow! he was not responsible when he wronged me. He must, if he has recovered his reason, be tortured with remorse. I know his nature well. He will feel keenly for the cruel wrong he has done me.'

'You are forgiving, Dr. Dane,' said Simeon

Hare. 'Sane or insane, I am afraid I should not have much forgiveness for a man who had wronged me as your brother has you.'

Dr. Dane kept close to the house, but one morning he took a walk, and, thinking to get away from the town, went by accident down the road towards Double Bay.

Oswald Montrose often walked to the city in the morning for exercise, and on this particular day he left home rather later than usual.

Dr. Dane walked rapidly, and was more than halfway to Double Bay, when Oswald Montrose met him. Without the slightest hesitation, Oswald went up to him and said :

'Good-morning, Richard. You do not often walk this way so early in the day. Is Amy quite well ?'

Dr. Dane looked earnestly at Oswald Montrose. He saw at once the likeness he bore to Amy, and from the manner in which he addressed him he concluded this was Oswald Montrose. At first he hesitated how to act. Then he made up his mind. It would be useless to conceal his identity from Amy's brother. He, at all events, would be willing to help him when he knew the real state of the case.

'I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance,' was Dr. Dane's astounding reply ; 'but, from the resemblance to your sister, I presume you are Oswald Montrose. I am Richard Dane. I arrived from London last week.'

Oswald Montrose's surprise can be conceived. He was so astonished he could make no reply. Surely he could believe the evidence of his eyes and his senses, and the man before him must be his brother-in-law.

'I do not understand,' he gasped. 'Are you not my sister's husband?'

'No,' said Dr. Dane; 'but I am Richard Dane, the man she loved before she left England to come out to you.'

'This must be the mad Frank Dane escaped,' thought Oswald. 'But however did he get out here?'

Dr. Dane divined his thoughts, and said :

'I am not Frank Dane, as you very possibly think. I am Dr. Richard Dane, and Amy, my intended wife, has married my brother, Frank Dane.'

The earnestness of his manner impressed Oswald Montrose.

'This is too important a matter to talk over here,' he said. 'If you will walk with me to Double Bay, which is not far, we can then go more fully into particulars.'

'Will it not be detaining you from your business?' said Dr. Dane.

'This is of far more importance than any business I have on hand to-day,' said Oswald. 'It concerns my sister's happiness, which is very dear to me.'

'And to me also,' said Richard Dane.

They got into a tram, and in the course of half an hour were seated in Oswald Montrose's room at Park House.

Richard Dane then gave Oswald an account of the imposture Frank had practised. He did not give Oswald Montrose Frank's letter to read ; he thought it would cause him needless pain.

For a couple of hours Dr. Dane held Oswald Montrose spell-bound with his extraordinary story. So remarkable was it, that at times Oswald found it hard to believe.

In his turn, Oswald Montrose gave an account of Frank Dane's arrival, of his stay at Park House, and of his wooing of his sister, and then the marriage.

'I was much set against it,' said Oswald. 'I tried hard to persuade Amy to postpone it, but she would not consent. She never had the slightest doubt it was yourself she was to marry. Of one thing I am certain—she loved your brother for himself, and does so still. All my doubts and surmises about the result of the marriage have been dispelled. I never saw two people more attached to each other. It is very sad—a terrible blow to you, Dr. Dane; but I must tell you candidly I do not believe any power on earth will shatter Amy's belief in the man she has married.'

'When she sees us together,' said Dr. Dane, 'it will be different. I love your sister very dearly, Mr. Montrose. We were engaged for several years. It is terrible for me to lose her in this way.'

'I hardly know how to act for the best,' said Oswald. 'It will be a great shock to Amy if she can be brought to believe the truth. Your brother is, I think, perfectly sane now. His manner when I first knew him struck me as peculiar. He always seemed to be on his guard, as though warding off some danger. His conduct was strange at times. This, combined with the news contained in your cablegram, made me doubt him. Dr. Simpson, however, in answer to a cablegram I sent him, declared you were Frank Dane, and in his charge.'

'No man was ever placed in a more unfortunate position than I have been, and still am,' said Dr. Dane sadly. 'Whichever way I turn I am beset with difficulties. If, as you say, Amy loves my brother Frank, my conduct in the future must cause her much unhappiness. You cannot expect me, Mr. Montrose, to quietly bury my identity and remain silent under my wrongs.'

'No,' said Oswald Montrose, 'that would be neither right nor just. You have suffered terribly, but you have this one consolation—you know your brother at the time he committed this great wrong was incapable of controlling his actions.'

Oswald Montrose had no doubt he was speaking to the real Richard Dane. All along he had doubted Frank Dane, but he knew his sister never had the slightest suspicion the brothers had changed places.

'I am aware Frank was an irresponsible person

when he so cunningly changed places with me,' said Dr. Dane. 'I can forgive him freely the wrong he has done me so far. He must, however, now he is restored and sound in mind, make me every reparation in his power. I know Frank too well to believe he is naturally of a cruel disposition. If, as you say, he is sane now, I doubt whether his madness will not return. He has had sane days, and even weeks, before, but he has always fallen back into his deplorable mental condition. Amy is in great danger even now. If Frank has a relapse, I shudder to think what might happen to her.'

'That would be dreadful,' said Oswald Montrose. 'But what can be done? I feel certain Amy will not give him up. Although he married her as Richard Dane, Frank Dane is the man she loves now. Still, if it is as you say, we must endeavour to save her from him.'

'Simeon Hare has an appointment with Frank next week,' said Dr. Dane. 'Frank has promised then to tell him what he intends to do. If he will quietly vanish from the scene as mysteriously as he came on it, all will be well, and I can resume my place in the world.'

'Do you mean to say you could deceive Amy, and make her think you were the man she married?' asked Oswald incredulously.

'No,' said Dr. Dane; 'nor should I wish to do so. What I mean is, if Frank agrees to go away, Amy will learn from his desertion that he is

guilty, and then in time I may win back her love.'

'It is possible,' said Oswald ; 'but I think Amy would blame you for causing her to lose Frank. She would soon be reconciled to the change in position her husband would undergo, but I doubt if it would be an easy matter to make her forget his loss. If Frank can be persuaded to go, it will be the best plan.'

They talked the question over during nearly the whole of the day.

Oswald Montrose promised to assist Dr. Dane to the best of his ability, and both were agreed there should be as little shock as possible to Amy.

When Dr. Dane reached home, he informed Simeon Hare where he had been.

'And did you convince him you were Richard Dane?' asked Simeon.

'Yes. He has no doubt about it,' said Dr. Dane.

'I am glad of that,' said Simeon ; 'I was rather afraid he would be on the other side.'

'I hope Frank will consent to see me,' said Dr. Dane, 'and also to go away without further trouble.'

'He will see you, I have no doubt,' said Simeon ; 'but as to his consenting to go away and leave his wife behind, that is a very different matter.'

'Then, you do not think he will give her up?' asked Dr. Dane.

'No,' said Simeon. 'If I know Frank Dane's nature, as judged from my meeting with him in the Domain, I fancy he would sooner die than part from his wife.'

CHAPTER XXI.

FRANK DANE'S DECISION.

'AMY, I have promised Simeon Hare an interview to-day,' said Frank Dane to his wife.

'Is it absolutely necessary for you to see him?' she asked.

'I think it will be the best way,' said Frank; 'I might convince him he is wrong.'

'I am afraid you will not do that,' said Amy. 'It is a question of money with him, and it will be against his interest to believe you.'

'The easiest plan would be to buy him off,' said Frank; 'but that is a course I do not care to adopt.'

'No,' said Amy, 'that would be dangerous. It might lead people to suspect you. Besides, it is not necessary; the man has no chance of proving such an absurd case.'

'I trust you will leave us entirely alone, Amy,' said Frank Dane. 'I am quite strong enough now to bear such an interview.'

Amy consented with reluctance. She knew the excitability of her husband's nature, and

dreaded the consequences of this interview with Simeon Hare.

Frank Dane sat in his room waiting for Simeon Hare. He had not made up his mind what course he should take. He wished to learn Simeon Hare's plans, if possible, before he gave any decided reply.

When the detective arrived, Frank Dane greeted him in a more friendly manner than he had adopted in the Domain.

The two men sat down facing each other, and each anxious for the other to make the first move.

Simeon Hare had decided it would be better, in case Frank Dane refused to come to a satisfactory arrangement, not to mention the fact of Dr. Dane being in Sydney. That could be sprung upon him as a surprise by Richard Dane himself.

At last Simeon Hare broke the silence, and said :

'I hope you have made up your mind, Mr. Dane, about the matter we talked of the other day.'

'That depends upon circumstances,' said Frank Dane.

'You gave me to understand,' said Simeon Hare, 'that you had decided to make your brother every reparation for the injury you had done him.'

'I asked you to give me a month in which to consider the matter,' said Frank. 'I told you, if you harassed me as you purposed doing, I should

in all probability lose my senses again, and if such a thing happened it would be so much the worse for your plans. I warn you now, Simeon Hare, that my reason is held in a balance, and that pressure may turn the scale, and cause me to become irresponsible again.'

'I shall have to risk that,' said Simeon. 'I have waited a month; I can wait no longer. Your brother's release must be obtained at once.'

'He cannot be released without my authority,' said Frank Dane.

'Perhaps not,' replied Simeon Hare—'although I am not so sure about that. He may, however, escape, as you did.'

Frank Dane turned pale.

'He may escape,' went on Simeon, 'and even come out here. If he did so, you would find yourself in serious trouble.'

'No one would believe him,' said Frank Dane. 'I should have him detained as an escaped lunatic.'

'Come, Mr. Dane,' said Simeon, changing his tactics: 'let me appeal to your better nature. I ask you to do your brother justice, to make amends for all past wrongs, to give him his freedom and the woman he loves, to restore him to the place he has lost.'

'And how do you propose I should do this?' said Frank Dane.

'By disappearing suddenly and without warning. You shall not lack means to carry out any

plans you may form. It is your brother's desire not to make you suffer more than he can possibly help. He does not desire revenge, but justice and restitution.'

Simeon Hare was warming to his work, and, as he thought, making a favourable impression on Frank Dane.

'This course would be the kindest you could adopt towards the woman you married. She would of course learn the truth, but you would be gone, and in time, no doubt, your brother Richard would win back her love.'

'Ah!' said Frank Dane sharply, 'that is the pith of the whole matter. Hear me out, Simeon Hare. I will not resign the woman I have won. I may, in the first instance, have won her by deception, but now she loves me and I love her; and yet you would have me basely desert her in order that my brother, whom she does not love, may take my place. I tell you it cannot be. That is a more monstrous iniquity than I have yet been guilty of. Before my brother Richard shall take her from me, I will kill her, and then kill myself.'

Frank Dane's eyes glistened, and Simeon Hare wondered if Richard Dane was right, and the madness was coming over him again.

'Threats such as these do your cause no good,' said Simeon Hare. 'If you threaten your wife, it will be a serious matter for you.'

Frank Dane trembled with excitement, but with wonderful control said:

‘Tell my brother, when you write, that if he cares to come out here I will obtain his release from Dr. Simpson. I will restore him all the money I have taken from him, and I will leave the country, and he can take my place. All this on one condition—that Amy, my wife, is allowed to go with me, and that he promises not to seek us out.’

‘Dr. Dane will never accept such terms,’ said Simeon Hare. ‘He must have a chance of regaining the woman he has lost through you. She is not safe with you, Frank Dane. Every hour she is in peril, and you know it. Your madness may return. Granted you are a sane man now, can you swear you will be sane a month hence? No, you cannot. I do not wish to be cruel, but it is necessary I should remind you that such may be the case.’

‘No matter what my condition may be in a month,’ said Frank Dane, ‘I am sane now, and you must not expect me to give up my wife.’

‘Then, all I can say is,’ said Simeon, ‘I only hope she may be preserved from danger. I shall use every effort to make you acknowledge your imposture. If you will not confess what you have done, I will force it from you. Did I not tell you every patient might be a spy set to entrap you? Think what your life will be with the dread of exposure hanging over you. Why, man, it will not be worth living. Your footsteps will be dogged; you shall be watched day and night. You will be

worked into such a state of fear and nervousness that you will suspect your dearest friend. The very servants in your house may be paid spies. Even your wife may commence to suspect you, when hints as to who and what you are reach her almost every day. Can you bear up against such a state of existence? Do you not think it will drive you mad again? Consider well what you are doing. Accept the terms I offer you, and disappear.'

Frank Dane, as he listened to the detective's words, became filled with an almost ungovernable fury against this man. He knew well enough what such a course of action as Simeon Hare had sketched would mean to him.

'Yours is a noble occupation!' sneered Frank fiercely. 'You are a mean, contemptible spy. Such men are not fit to cumber the ground. I would rather be mad than undertake such work as yours. If the world judged between us, the verdict would be in my favour. If you have a spark of manliness and pluck in you, take me now and risk everything. You dare not, man! You are a coward and a sneak! It is your wretched business to hound unfortunate men down. I see now how you and such as you work.'

'A poor chance of reforming an erring man has at your hands. You and your tribe are paid to prove men guilty, not innocent. You are paid to make thieves. If there were no wrong-doers your occupation would be gone. Bah!' went on Frank

Dane, in a tone of contempt that stung Simeon Hare to the quick; 'go back to your criminal manufactory at Scotland Yard. Plot and lie, and scheme to bring about the downfall of men! Can *you* swear to me, Simeon Hare, that you have never sent an innocent man into a felon's cell? You start. Perhaps you have knowingly done so; but your credit and the credit of the force were at stake—and that was of more, far more, importance than the liberty of one innocent man.

'You are the wrong man to preach to me about justice and restitution,' went on Frank rapidly. 'Have all your actions been tempered with justice and mercy? Has the former not been withheld—the quality of mercy many times strained—until there was not even a dreg of pity left? You have told me how you would work in my case. Suppose I deserve it, suppose I am doomed to suffer in this manner—that does not alter the fact that you have exposed the horrible manner in which you men work up such cases.

'Surrounded by a network of your drawing, friends bribed, servants bribed, false witnesses bribed, I tell you, Simeon Hare, you are responsible for much wrong and cruel injustice. You live in a land of "spydom." I do not envy you. In such a land you no doubt hold a high position. You are welcome to it. I wish you joy of it, you treacherous thief-maker!'

Frank Dane's words came out in a torrent. Simeon Hare felt them keenly, for he was a man

who worked honestly according to his light, and the man heaping these fierce reproaches upon him had no cause to do so.

‘You are bitter, Frank Dane,’ said Simeon Hare. ‘Your accusations are unjust ; I will not attempt to argue with you—it would do no good. I love my profession, and I have no need to defend it from such men as yourself. You have had your turn—now it is mine. I have no compunction in addressing you, whatever other people may have. When you were mad, I could pity and make excuses for you ; now you are sane, on your own showing, I cannot spare you. The wrongs you committed when mad are pardoned. You are sane at the present moment, and know right from wrong—therefore, Frank Dane, I tell you if you do not yield your brother his lawful place in the world, you are a common rogue, cheat, and liar. Hands off!’ said Simeon Hare, as Frank made a sudden step forward as if to strike him.

‘You are more than this : you have betrayed an innocent trusting woman ; you have married her under a false name ; you have blasted her life, for when she learns the truth her love will turn to hate. You have no need to call me foul names, Frank Dane, for now I say to you, in your proper senses, you are one of the most daring, unscrupulous impostors it has ever been my lot to meet. You need expect no mercy at my hands. I have done with you once and for all. When I leave this house the fight between us will com-

mence, and I am not used to defeat. Have you anything more to say?’

‘Yes!’ thundered Frank Dane. ‘Go! Leave this house, and never darken my doors again! If I had known my brother could employ such a man as you, I should not have had any qualms of conscience about what I have done. I refuse to see you again. Do your worst!’

Simeon Hare made no reply. As he left the house and walked home, he felt he had made a mistake, and gone too far with Frank Dane.

‘I could not stand the insults he heaped upon me,’ he said to Dr. Dane, in describing what had taken place. ‘I had to retaliate, and this is the result. I’m a disgrace to the “pro.” I’ve made a mess of the whole thing. You will have to see him yourself now, and bring him to reason.’

‘I’m sorry you quarrelled with him,’ said Dr. Dane; ‘it makes my task more difficult.’

‘Oh, he’ll come round when he sees you,’ said Simeon; ‘he’ll fancy the game is up. Then there is that letter. Threaten to show it to his wife. If that does not bring him to his feet, I don’t know what will. He’ll never dare to let her read that.’

‘And I should never dare to show it her,’ said Richard Dane. ‘No, Simeon, I would rather lose her than show her that letter. She would never love a man who did such an act. I can use it as a weapon against Frank if he is obstinate. He will think I mean to show it to Amy, but I would rather cut my right hand off than that the woman I love should receive such a blow from me.’

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BROTHERS MEET AGAIN.

RICHARD DANE awaited a favourable opportunity for an interview with his brother Frank. He wished to take Frank Dane completely by surprise, so that he would be off his guard.

After he heard Simeon Hare's account of the interview, he knew he had a difficult task before him. He could not bring himself to believe that Frank Dane meant to act as he had informed Simeon Hare he should. In the excitement of the moment, Frank Dane, no doubt, said many things he afterwards repented of.

Dr. Dane thought over many ways of gaining the desired interview with Frank. He did not want to alarm Amy if possible, and he knew Frank would not voluntarily pay him a visit.

At last, at the suggestion of Simeon Hare, Dr. Dane decided to wait until he ascertained that both Frank Dane and Amy were out. Then he would ring boldly at the door, and walk in when the servant opened it, and he would, no doubt, be mistaken for his brother.

It was an easy matter to watch Frank Dane's house from Hyde Park.

For several mornings Richard Dane, with evident anxiety, sat in the park closely watching the house. One or two passers-by nodded to him,

fancying he was Dr. Dane, and wondering what he was sitting there for.

At last he was rewarded by seeing Frank Dane and Amy go out together. Dr. Dane's heart gave a great bound as he saw the woman he loved. He knew her at once. Her figure was familiar to him, and although he did not see her face, the mere glimpse of her made him more determined than ever to win her back at all cost.

He watched them until they were out of sight, and then, passing out of the park at the Oxford Street entrance, turned down College Street. He went to the door and rang the bell.

The servant was a new one, and had only been in the house a few days. She at once opened the door, and Dr. Dane passed in without any notice being taken on her part.

He walked along the hall, and by chance entered Frank Dane's study. He drew a chair from the side and sat down to wait.

Dr. Dane glanced round the room with interest. He saw at once that Frank had everything arranged in excellent order and style. A woman's handiwork was apparent in the various knick-knacks hanging on the walls, and in the numerous ingeniously-made articles, both useful and ornamental.

On the mantelpiece were several photographs. Richard Dane took one of Amy's, recently taken by Falk, and looked at it with longing eyes. The likeness did not flatter her; it was a true

portrait, and Dr. Dane recognised it as such. He looked at it for a considerable time. As he was replacing it, he saw a date on the back. From this he knew it had not been taken more than a fortnight, and this made him take it up again and examine it with fresh interest.

It was not the portrait of a woman who was unhappy, or had anything to fear in her married life. On the contrary, Amy's face reflected the happiness and contentment within. The eyes looked into Dr. Dane's with a clear, steadfast gaze. There was nothing strange in them, nothing unfathomable. They were the eyes of a woman whose faith in mankind had not been shattered, whose experiences of married life had not wrought the one great change in her.

Dr. Dane was a physiognomist, and he drew a fairly accurate picture of Amy's life from the face he was looking at so intently.

'She has not suffered, that is certain,' he said to himself. 'She is happy and contented, therefore Frank must have behaved in a manner calculated to inspire her with confidence. It will be so much the more difficult for me to win her. How different she would have looked had Frank carried out the threats contained in his letter!'

Dr. Dane shuddered at the thought.

He remained in the room for an hour, when James Fairton looked in.

Dr. Dane had his back to him, but he recognised his old servant's voice as he said :

'I beg your pardon, sir. I did not know you had returned.'

'Mrs. Dane will be in presently,' said Dr. Dane, without turning round. 'I came back to attend to something I had forgotten.'

James Fairton looked hard at the speaker, but could not see his face.

'Very good, sir,' he said, and as he left the door he thought, 'How peculiar his voice sounded! I hope there is nothing wrong.'

Dr. Dane glanced out of the window, and saw Frank Dane coming up the street alone.

This was the first time Dr. Dane had seen his brother since he paid him a visit in the asylum. He felt strangely excited at the interview that was about to take place. How should he receive Frank? Would it be better to sit with his back to him, or face him as he entered the room?

He had not long to decide. He heard Frank Dane quietly open the door with his latch-key and come in. It was a moment of intense excitement to Richard Dane, so much depended upon it. He stood with his back to the fireplace and waited.

Frank Dane came along the hall with rapid steps. His hand was on the door: he opened it sharply and entered the room. In an instant he was face to face with his brother Richard. The two men, exactly alike in features and form, gazed into each other's eyes.

Frank Dane was so astonished he could not

believe the evidence of his senses. He thought he was suffering under some dreadful hallucination. His feet were rooted to the spot—he could not move them. He rubbed his eyes to make sure he was not mistaken.

Then, with a great effort, he came slowly towards his brother, like a man in a dream.

Dr. Dane watched him closely and with intense interest. He wished to ascertain the state of Frank's mind, and whether he was really sane or insane.

Frank Dane's face was a study. Perfect bewilderment was depicted thereon. What he saw was evidently beyond his belief. He stretched out his hand and touched his brother's arm; then he passed it over his body, eventually putting both hands on Dr. Dane's shoulders, and peering into his face.

Dr. Dane did not speak. He steadily withstood his brother's searching gaze.

It was a strange picture—the two men the exact counterpart of each other.

'Are you indeed my brother?' said Frank in a hollow voice, 'or is this some fearful dream?'

'It is no dream,' replied Dr. Dane. 'I am your brother Richard. What have you to say to me? You do not seem glad to see me.'

'How did you come here?' said Frank. He could not yet grasp the situation.

'That is a long story,' said Richard Dane. 'I will tell it you if you wish to hear it. Shall we be

interrupted? Perhaps you had better lock the door. We have much to talk about, Frank.'

'No one will interrupt us,' replied Frank Dane. 'Perhaps you had better fasten the door.'

Dr. Dane went to the door, turned the lock, and then came back to his brother.

'At last we meet, Frank,' he said. 'You have done me a cruel wrong. It was no thanks to you I got out of the asylum and regained my freedom.'

Frank Dane sat down and covered his face with his hands. He was in a state of bewilderment. He did not know how to act. This sudden appearance of his brother thwarted all his plans.

'You asked me how I came here,' said Richard Dane. 'I will tell you.'

Dr. Dane then gave Frank Dane a minute account of all that had taken place: how Dr. Simpson discovered he was the real Dr. Dane, and how he had provided him with the money for the journey. At the mention of the letter he had received Frank Dane started. He did not recollect writing it, and had forgotten all the contents.

Dr. Dane saw such was the case, and did not wish to show him that terrible letter unless it became absolutely necessary.

'What do you expect me to do?' asked Frank Dane, when his brother had finished.

'Can you ask?' said Dr. Dane. 'There is only one course open to you.'

'And that is?' asked Frank.

To do all in your power to repair the wrong

you have done me,' said Dr. Dane. 'Have you any idea what I have suffered during my detention at Dr. Simpson's?'

'I am very sorry,' said Frank, 'but I was not in my right mind then. Had I been so, such a thing would never have happened.'

'But you are in your right mind now,' said Dr. Dane, 'therefore you can have no hesitation about the course you must take. You cannot for one moment imagine, after all I have suffered through you, that now I am free I am going to stand calmly by and see you fill my place in the world.'

'I am willing to make every reparation in my power,' said Frank Dane in a low tone. 'There is, however, one thing I cannot do: it is out of my power to do it.'

Dr. Dane guessed what he meant, but said :

'First of all, let me know what you are prepared to do.'

'I will resign my place here to you. I will restore to you all I have taken from you. I will leave Sydney, and you shall hear of me no more. We will part, and never meet again. It would only cause unnecessary pain for us to constantly see each other.'

'Are you quite sure you will restore to me *all* you have taken from me?' said Richard meaningly.

'Yes,' said Frank.

'You have not only taken my place,' said Richard: 'you have stolen my intended wife—the woman I love so dearly. This is the most cruel wrong of

all. I can forgive you everything but that, Frank.'

Frank Dane did not speak.

'You have won Amy under a false name,' said Dr. Dane. 'When she learns the truth, she will despise you for your deception.'

'Never!' said Frank Dane fiercely. 'She will never despise me, and she will not cease to love me. Amy's my wife, and she shall remain with me.'

Dr. Dane controlled his feelings; he quietly said:

'I can make every allowance for you, Frank, but the wrong you have done you must undo. I know you better than you know yourself. Make me full restitution before it is too late.'

'What do you mean?' said Frank Dane, startled by his brother's tone.

'I mean, right the wrong you have done freely and willingly now you are sane. There may come a time again when you will be unable to distinguish right from wrong.'

'Ah,' said Frank, 'you may be clever, Richard, but I have no reason to fear what you say. I know I am cured—completely cured.'

'You may think so,' said Dr. Dane, 'but I know better. I have studied you for years, Frank.'

'If you are trying to frighten me into resigning Amy, you will not succeed. Will you leave it to her?' said Frank suddenly. 'Let her choose between us.'

'When she knows all, yes,' said Richard Dane. 'Then she shall choose between us; but she must

know everything. She must be told why you married her, or she will not understand. In my presence you must make a full and complete confession of all the wrong you have done us. She must be made to understand you are the impostor. Then, and then only, can she choose between us.'

'She loves me—her husband,' said Frank. 'It would be cruel to her to part us. She will never love you as she now loves me. I cannot tell her why I married her. If I did she would not believe me. I have her own confession, told to me believing me to be Richard, and not Frank, that it was through me she came to love you. Had she not thought it her duty to leave me because of my mental condition, she would never have become engaged to you.'

'I do not believe it,' said Dr. Dane.

'You shall hear it from her own lips,' said Frank Dane.

'Will you do as I ask?' said Dr. Dane. 'On those conditions only will I consent, and even then reluctantly, to let Amy choose between us.'

'No,' said Frank Dane. 'I love her, and she loves me. She is my wife.'

'If you do not consent, Frank, you will regret it as long as you live,' said Dr. Dane.

'I do not think so,' said Frank. 'I should regret doing anything to part us.'

'Then, I have only one course to pursue,' said Dr. Dane.

'And that is?' asked Frank.

'To read to Amy the letter you wrote to me before your marriage, and whose awful contents caused the shock which brought on my illness, and ultimately led to my identification.'

Frank Dane looked surprised.

'I did not write to you,' he said. 'I have no recollection of sending you any such letter.'

'Then, I will read it to you, and perhaps it will refresh your memory,' said Dr. Dane. 'You have forced me to do this. I would much rather not have done so. When you have heard it, I am sure you will agree that if Amy heard its contents she would shrink from you in horror and disgust.'

Frank Dane smiled incredulously.

Dr. Dane took a letter from his inside coat pocket.

'Do you know that handwriting?' he asked, showing Frank the envelope.

Frank Dane recognised his own handwriting. There was the New South Wales stamp and the Sydney post-mark on with the date plainly visible. He saw the date was shortly before his marriage with Amy.

'I have no recollection of it,' he said in a bewildered manner.

'I will read it,' said Dr. Dane.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LETTER AND ITS EFFECTS.

DR. DANE commenced to read the letter Frank Dane had written him, and which caused him such a shock in the asylum.

As the terrible nature of what he had written was gradually revealed to him, Frank Dane staggered under the blow. He had no recollection of having written the letter, and therefore its fierce, brutal language crushed him and terrified him.

Dr. Dane was a good reader, and he took care the salient points in the letter should hit home. He emphasized the worst portions, re-reading some of them. When he came to the end, he said :

‘You were off your guard, Frank, when you wrote this. One of your worst fits of passion was on you. See, you even went so far as to sign your own name ;’ and he held the signature before the confounded man’s eyes. ‘You see for yourself it is your own handwriting. The date on the envelope, the stamp, the post-mark, all go to prove you wrote it. Even if you refused to acknowledge you are Frank Dane, your signature gives the lie to it.’

As Dr. Dane looked at his brother, he saw the effect the reading of this letter had upon him.

He pitied his brother, because he knew how he had suffered himself when he read it.

Frank Dane sat stunned under this crushing blow. He remained in deep thought for some time. Slowly but surely remembrance came back to him. Gradually his mind went back to the scene before his marriage. He remembered how he had pursued his wife, not as an ardent lover, but as a man filled with a mad exultant passion, which he desired to vent upon the woman he was to make his wife. He remembered writing that letter now, and with what fiendish glee he had gloated over it.

These thoughts were more than he could bear; he was crushed and stupefied under them. He wondered how he could have borne such feelings towards the woman he now loved so dearly.

He thought of their honeymoon, and of the ride to Melbourne, and what occurred during the night in the car. Again he fancied he heard the soft voice calling upon him to save Amy from himself. He saw before him the house and the veranda, upon which he sat with his wife on the first afternoon of their arrival in Melbourne.

He recollected the first night there, and the struggle he had with the demon within him, urging him to take Amy to his arms to wreak his vengeance upon her. How he had fought and struggled that night, and his wife had acted as a guardian angel and watched over

him as he slept, tired out and weary with his efforts. What a good woman she was, and how she loved him!

If she heard that awful letter read, what would she think? She must believe it, the proof was so clear. Then she would know the real reason why he married her. Would not that make her shrink from him?

But he was not Frank Dane then : he was a madman blind with passion, reason gone, hate and fury raging in his breast. Now he was another man. A merciful Providence had spared him, and saved Amy from a fearful wrong—even when the temptation was at its height. Not many men would have had the strength to resist the animal passions within them had they been situated as he was on that night, thought Frank Dane.

As these recollections crowded upon him, he thought he must at some remote period have been another being. It seemed to him, in his present frame of mind, utterly impossible that he should have done what he had, and pursued Amy in such a relentless manner.

He looked at his brother, and Dr. Dane's face was full of sympathy. He felt for Frank Dane, and knew something of what he suffered.

Frank Dane lowered his eyes again, and did not speak. He could not, for he felt the words must choke him in the utterance. Then Simeon Hare's threats rang in his ears. Why had his brother set this man on to hound him down? He had to

acknowledge that his brother had every right to do so.

'I am sorry I had to read the letter to you, Frank,' said Dr. Dane gently, 'but you gave me no option. You will now understand something of the nature of my sufferings when I read it, and knew Amy was in the power of such a man.'

'Good God! yes,' said Frank Dane excitedly. 'It must have been a terrible shock to you. It is to me, when I think what might have happened to Amy had a merciful Providence not intervened and saved us both.'

'How did it happen, Frank?' asked Dr. Dane, who could not understand the sudden change that must have come over his brother.

'It is a long story, if I tell it all,' said Frank. 'It was on our bridal night when we reached Melbourne. I had a struggle with myself in the train, but it was not until the first night the change came.'

'What peril Amy was in!' thought Dr. Dane. 'What an escape!'

'Something seemed to hold me back,' said Frank Dane, 'some invisible presence. I cannot tell you all, for I hardly realize how it happened. I felt I had suddenly recovered my reason, and that I had recovered in order to save Amy from myself. From that night I loved her. All my hate and revenge was turned into blind faith in her, and affection for her. Oh, Richard! think what it means to me to part with Amy. You cannot possibly love her as

I do ! You have been parted for some years. You have never lived with her, been near her daily, almost hourly, watched her love develop and grow, and learned how one woman's true affection can make a paradise on earth for a man. She is yours by right, Richard, but she is mine by more sacred ties. She is part of me—I feel it is so—and I am part of her. We live for each other. I believe, if I asked her, she would go with me to-morrow and bury herself with me in some obscure part of the globe, far from even the verge of civilization. You may claim her, Richard, but you cannot force her to love you. What would Amy be to you without love ? I know I have done you a terrible wrong—this the greatest of all, that I have won the woman you loved, and made her mine. Cannot you take all I have, and leave me Amy ?

Dr. Dane was moved by his brother's words, but he could not give up all hope of winning Amy.

‘Let her choose between us,’ he said. ‘It was your suggestion, and I will abide by it.’

‘And what a choice it will be !’ said Frank Dane. ‘I am the man she loves. To shatter that love, you will have to let her read that terrible letter. I could not bear that. Sooner than Amy should know what horrible thoughts I once possessed, I would leave her and never see her face again. You cannot mean to use that letter to influence her in her choice ?’

‘That depends upon circumstances,’ said Dr. Dane, ‘and the nature of your confession to her in

my presence. If you tell her truthfully all that has taken place, I will not show her this letter.'

'How can I tell her all?' said Frank Dane in a low voice. 'Richard, to do what you ask would turn my brain again. Do you wish to drive me back to madness?'

'No, Frank,' said Dr. Dane. 'I pray to God you may never return to that awful state. You drove *me* to the verge of madness by your conduct. Had I not become insensible and suffered that severe illness, I should have become insane. The shock was too great for me. When I realized all that letter meant to the woman I loved, I fainted, and it was a blessing I did so. Now is the time, Frank, to recompense me for such sufferings. It is only by a full confession on your part I can hope to win back Amy's love. Tell her all—hide nothing from her. Let her make her choice with her eyes fully opened. I leave it to your sense of justice to say what is right. If you do this, Frank—if you conceal nothing from her—I will promise not to show her that letter.'

'You will do that?' said Frank, with a sigh of relief. 'But I am afraid I shall not go far enough when I tell Amy all, and then you may use it.'

'I must have fair play now,' said Dr. Dane. 'You have a great advantage over me, as you know. I confess it will be hard for me to win back Amy's love, but I mean to try.'

'It shall be as you wish,' said Frank. 'I will do this thing, but you must agree to abide by

Amy's decision. Also, you must agree not to take any further steps against me, or to try to have me placed under restraint again. I will restore you your property, as far as lies in my power, and if Amy decides to go with me, you must never try to seek us out.'

'All this I agree to,' said Dr. Dane. 'It will be a bitter blow to you, Frank, for something tells me I shall win, and that Amy will be mine at last. I do not say she will at once decide to let me take your place. That would be impossible to such a woman; her soul would revolt at such an exchange. She may decide to leave you, and wait until the shock has subsided, and then she may turn to me. At first she will do so from her sense of what is right and just, and that feeling will develop into regard and love.'

'You speak confidently,' said Frank; 'but I have no fear. Amy has told me that no words of mine can shatter her faith in me. She has even gone so far as to say that were I indeed Frank Dane she could love no other man.'

'She has said that?' questioned Dr. Dane in surprise.

'It is true,' said Frank. 'You see now I have good grounds to be confident of success.'

'You have indeed,' said Dr. Dane. 'However, let it be as we have decided. Amy shall choose between us. I have no wish to force her in any way, but I want her to know the truth,

and also to know how bitterly you have wronged me.'

They were so intensely interested in their conversation that they failed to hear the house-door opened and shut.

Amy Dane had returned. She heard voices in the study, and concluded her husband must be engaged in a consultation.

'Dr. Dane has returned,' she said to James Fairton.

'Yes,' said Fairton. 'He came in about a quarter of an hour after you went out with him.'

Amy looked surprised as she said :

'You must have made a mistake, James. Dr. Dane was with me for more than an hour.'

'Mary let him in,' said James.

Mary was sent for, and said Dr. Dane rang, and she opened the door for him. It certainly was not more than a quarter of an hour after they went out.

'But he has a key,' said Amy. 'Why should he ring? Who is in the study with him?'

'No one,' said James Fairton.

'I heard voices as I came past,' said Amy.

'I have let no one in, marm,' said Mary.

'It is very strange,' said Amy.

She turned pale as the thought flashed across her that possibly Frank Dane had escaped and found his way out. No, it was too absurd, and she dismissed it. But it was ver^y mysterious,

and she must know who was with her husband in the study. She went to the door and knocked.

The two men were silent, and looked at one another.

‘That’s Amy’s knock,’ said Frank in a whisper.

‘Remember what you have promised,’ said Dr. Dane.

Frank Dane gave an agonized look at his brother.

‘So soon,’ he murmured—‘so soon. My God! what will become of us?’

Another knock.

‘Who is there?’ asked Frank Dane.

‘I am,’ said Amy. ‘Are you engaged?’

‘I shall not be long,’ said Frank Dane.

Richard Dane whispered to him:

‘Now, man; now is your time, Frank, while you have courage.’

Frank Dane hesitated a moment, and then went to the door.

Amy heard him unlock it, and wondered at it being fastened. When she saw her husband’s face she gave a gasp.

‘Richard, dear Richard!’ she said, clasping his arm. ‘What has happened? Are you ill, dear?’

‘No, I am not ill, Amy,’ he said, in a hoarse voice. ‘It is worse than that. Come inside.’

She entered the room, and saw Dr. Dane standing on the hearthrug. She did not cry out or utter an exclamation of surprise. She looked

from one brother to the other in utter amazement.

'Tell her,' said Frank Dane; 'I cannot.'

'I am Richard Dane, Amy,' said Dr. Dane.

'Have you not even a word of welcome for me?'

She looked at him strangely, and said hastily:

'You are not Richard Dane; you are Frank Dane.'

Then, turning to Frank Dane, she put her arms round his neck, and kissed him fondly.

'My poor Richard!' she said; 'how you must have suffered! But he shall not harm you. We will be brave, and not fear him.'

Dr. Dane gave a sigh, which was more like a groan of despair, as he saw what an almost hopeless task he had before him.

CHAPTER XXIV

'CHOOSE BETWEEN US.'

FRANK DANE gently removed Amy's arms from his neck, and led her to a chair.

'Amy,' he said, 'I have a duty to perform which is painful to me, and must be to you.'

'What can you have to tell me,' said Amy, 'that I do not already know?'

Dr. Dane remained standing, and Frank motioned him to be seated.

'Since we were married, Amy,' commenced

Frank, in a broken voice, ‘we have been very happy.’

‘We have indeed,’ said Amy. ‘I never expected we should be so happy.’

‘I am now going to try and shatter that happiness,’ said Frank. ‘I have to tell you a story of imposture, amounting, perhaps, to crime, of which I have been guilty toward you. Amy, you once told me that even if I were Frank Dane you could love no other man.’

‘I did, Richard,’ she said, with her hands clasped, and an eager, expectant look in her face. She had an undefinable fear that some dreadful secret was about to be imparted to her. ‘But why talk of impossibilities?’ she added.

‘It is not an impossibility,’ said Frank Dane, in a voice breaking with agony. ‘I am Frank Dane. That is my brother Richard, your lover—the man you were engaged to, and from whom I stole your love.’

‘What are you saying, Richard?’ she said, addressing Frank. ‘You have been over-excited, love, in this interview. I do not wonder at it. Be calm, Richard. Think what you are saying.’

‘I am telling you the truth, Amy,’ he said; ‘I am Frank Dane. Listen to me, because upon the story I have to tell you hangs what is more to me than life. You must believe what I tell you, Amy, because it is true.’

She shook her head, and the tears stood in

her eyes. She looked first at her husband, then at Dr. Dane. Even in her trouble and perplexity she saw again how remarkable was the resemblance between them.

‘When I have finished my story, Amy, you must, you shall believe me! I will live no longer a life of falsehood and imposture. I have done you and my brother a cruel wrong; let me earn your forgiveness if I can.’

‘Not to me. You have done no wrong to me,’ said Amy. ‘I have had nothing but kindness from you, Richard. Pray do not go on; I implore you not to do so. I will believe you are Frank Dane if you wish it. You are the man I love—my husband; and I am yours, and cannot love anyone else.’

Frank Dane looked at his brother with a sad smile.

‘Finish your story, Frank,’ said Richard Dane.

‘Amy, before I left England, I was not responsible for my actions. Now I am, and it is just you should learn the truth. I changed places with Richard. I went to his house one night and hid myself until he came in. Then, when he went to bed, I chloroformed him, and while in a state of stupor changed clothes with him. How I escaped from the asylum I need not relate—I almost forget myself. The past is somewhat blurred now; I cannot recollect all I did or said in those days of my madness. I left Richard

lying insensible on the bed, and went downstairs. James Fairton was there, and I told him my brother Frank had escaped, and during the night got into the house, that we had a struggle in the bedroom, and that he was then lying insensible. James Fairton mistook me for Richard, and I saw at once my plan would succeed. Dr. Simpson came, and instead of conveying me back to the asylum, he took Richard.’

Amy hid her face in her hands. Her husband was so terribly in earnest that she felt bound to listen to his extraordinary story. She imagined his brother must in some way have exercised power over him to make her husband relate such a tale.

‘Then I took Richard’s place in the world,’ said Frank Dane, ‘and held it from that day to this. I sold his practice ; I obtained his money. I saw Dr. Simpson, and knew there was no chance of discovery there. I visited Richard when he occupied my room, and I taunted him with what I should do to you, Amy.’

She looked up with a frightened face. Frank Dane saw the change and trembled, but he held firmly to his purpose. At all costs, Amy must never see that terrible letter.

‘Yes, Amy,’ he went on, ‘I came out here filled with hate towards you, and thirsting for revenge. In my madness, I imagined you had deceived me and thrown me over for Richard. My only excuse,

Amy, is that I was insane at this time. I was not in my right mind when you met me on the steamer with your brother, but the voyage did me good, and I was more rational. You recollect how I visited at your brother's house, and the suspicions he had of me. Those suspicions were well founded, hence my dislike to him, for fear he might influence you and thwart my plans. Those plans, Amy, I shudder to tell you of; but the truth must be told: it is the only recompense I can make. I kept strict watch over myself. Oh, the misery of that time when I think of it!' he said in a heart-broken voice. 'I schemed and plotted with devilish cunning, but I was not able at all times to master the mad feelings within me. I knew I was mad, and I was determined to possess you, Amy. What my method of revenge was to be I leave you to guess.'

Amy gave a cry of pain and horror. She suddenly thought of her husband's conduct in the Art Gallery, and of the dreadful picture of those mad children he had drawn.

The brothers looked at her in alarm.

She rose from her seat and went to Frank Dane.

'You remember that scene in the Art Gallery?' she said in a trembling voice.

'Yes,' moaned Frank; 'you understand the picture now.'

'Oh, it is horrible, horrible!' said Amy. 'I cannot bear it. Let me go! Let me go!'

‘Be calm for a few moments,’ said Dr. Dane firmly but kindly. ‘It is far better you should hear all. When you have heard Frank to the end, you will be better able to decide.’

She hardly grasped his meaning. She was dazed and stupefied. She had been the woman of that picture, and it was to be her children whose fair faces concealed the devil within them. The thought made her sick at heart, faint and weary.

‘When I drew you a word-sketch of that picture,’ said Frank, ‘I saw I had gone too far, and endeavoured to retrieve my mistake, which I did. But I meant it at that time, Amy, mad as I then was. Could a more fearful revenge on an innocent woman have been contemplated?’

Frank Dane was growing excited. He felt an almost morbid pleasure in dwelling over these painful facts.

‘I was mad when I married you, Amy. As I stood by the altar, I only thought of one thing—revenge upon you. A voice within me urged me on. The devil tempted me and prompted me. When you thought I was marrying you for love, I was marrying you for hate. It is true, Amy, bitter as it is for me to tell you. Cannot you think what it costs me to make this confession, and have pity on me now?’

Amy did not move. She sat like one in a stupor, but she heard all and understood. Many

incidents recalled to memory by her husband's words corroborated all he said.

'I took you to Melbourne because I thought you would be more alone and in my power.'

He saw her shudder, and went on in a dull, heavy tone of voice :

'I meant to make the sacrifice of you to the madman within me complete. I could have crushed the life out of you in the carriage as we drove away from the church. All the brutal passions of the fiend working within me were roused. "She is yours! She is yours!" a voice seemed to keep saying to me. "Take her, and use her as you will. She cannot escape." I meant to do all this, and more, when we reached Melbourne.'

Frank Dane looked at his brother and saw he had no need to go further. Richard Dane took the fatal letter from his pocket and tore it up slowly, and then threw the bits into the fireplace.

When Frank Dane saw what his brother had done, he felt hope renewed within him.

He knew now Amy would be spared the worst blow of all.

'You know what happened when we were in Melbourne?' went on Frank in a pleading tone. 'Think, Amy, how I struggled with the demon within me. You recollect how you left me in the room. During that time I fought a terrible battle, and, thank God, I conquered !

‘We had a strange bridal night, Amy. A terrible wrong was averted that night. You had an escape from a fate worse than death. Amy,’ said Frank in a voice of such anguish that it roused her sympathies and love for him—‘Amy, I suddenly became sane. I felt God had granted me that inestimable boon—my reason again—in order that I might save you.

‘Then my eyes were opened, and I knew it was not hate, but love, I bore you. I was not the same man who stood at the altar with you the day before. But love, Amy, requires to be conquered and held in subjection as much as hate. I had, after my victory over the devil within me, to renew the fight with my love for you.

‘I am a man, Amy, with powerful passions, a man to whom love—at the first moment it is fully recognised—demands full possession. When I saw you my bride, my own wife, and felt you in my arms and your kisses upon my lips—think, Amy, how I had to fight with my love for you in order to save you.

‘That night, Amy, I fought to save a woman’s honour as bravely as ever man did in this world. You were that woman. You know how I succeeded. I won that battle, Amy; I saved your honour. I have been fighting to save you ever since that night. In your innocence you have tempted me until I almost felt my struggle was hopeless, and that I must give in.

‘I speak this before my brother Richard, because he must know all. He must know it from me, Amy, because you cannot tell him. He shall know the truth. I have been guilty of many monstrous things, Richard, but this one great wrong I have not done you or Amy.

‘There is the woman I love better than life itself,’ and he pointed to Amy, down whose face the tears were raining unrestrained. ‘I swear to you, Richard, as there is a God above us, that she is as pure and undefiled as on the day she stood with me before the altar. My love for her is so great that I could make any sacrifice for her.

‘My tale is ended, Amy. I have confessed my fault, and I plead for forgiveness. I shall restore to my brother Richard his name and his position. I willingly do this. But he asks more. He asks me for the woman I love, but who is his love by rights. He asks me to surrender the one being I hold dearest upon earth. Amy, Richard asks me to restore you to him; we have decided you shall choose between us. He will abide by your decision, so will I. If you part from me, I shall go out into the world alone, a wanderer upon the face of the earth. You will never see me again. I shall not take my own life—that would be the act of a coward—but I shall work out a penance that will be to me a living death.

‘Amy, you must decide. Richard, my brother, has every claim to your love and your respect. He

has treated me as few men would have done ; he has performed a noble action you are little aware of. He is yours, Amy, and you are his. Choose between us : one must be taken and the other left.’

Frank Dane sank back exhausted.

Richard Dane grasped his hand. In a voice full of emotion, he said :

‘ You are a noble fellow, Frank ! You have made ample atonement. I freely forgive you the wrong you have done me. It was not my brother Frank who did me this great injury, but the madman within him. I do not wonder Amy has learned to love you. If you have won her love I cannot regain it. My love for her is as strong as ever, and it is hard to give her up ; if Amy chooses to remain with you, I shall accept her decision, although my life will be clouded without her. I won her love, Frank, and you have taken her from me. This is the cruellest blow of all.’

Amy Dane could not speak. She was struggling between love and duty. She believed Frank Dane now. No one could doubt the truth of all he had said after hearing him.

She looked lovingly into his eyes. She forgot the awful fate he in his madness desired for her. She saw before her the man she loved. Richard Dane saw her glance fall upon Frank, and he bowed his head in sorrow.

Amy went to Frank Dane as he sat back in his

chair, and knelt at his feet. She bowed her head and sobbed bitterly, as though her heart would break.

It was a painful scene. They both loved her dearly, and felt how she suffered. Even their own misery was almost forgotten at the sight of Amy's tears and anguish.

CHAPTER XXV.

AMY'S DECISION.

It was some time before Amy sufficiently recovered her feelings to speak plainly. The struggle she had undergone during this brief time was visible in her face. The two men waited to hear her decision much as the prisoner awaits his doom from the lips of the judge.

She had to decide between them—to make the happiness of one, to ruin the happiness of the other. She thought of those early days of her courtship in England with Richard Dane. She knew what he was to her then. Her husband had deceived her, it was true. He had married her with the basest motives, but, then, he was not responsible. She knew now she loved the man she had married as Richard Dane, and that her love for his brother was almost, if not quite, dead.

When she spoke, she hardly knew what she

ought to say in order not to wound the man she felt she could not choose.

Slowly she rose, and went to Dr. Dane.

He was about to clasp her in his arms, and a glad light gleamed in his eyes, when she said :

‘I must believe my husband, but you must remember he still is my husband.’

Dr. Dane drew back, and she went on :

‘In those early days in England, Richard, I loved you, and believing it was Richard Dane, I married your brother. But even in those early days it was Frank who first attracted me. When, however, his mind became unhinged, and I saw your tender kindness for him, my heart turned to you.

‘You have been cruelly wronged. Frank has been guilty of a wicked imposture; but ought we not to remember he is not now the same man, but another being? Think for a moment what it all means to him, Richard. He is crushed down by this fearful blow, by the knowledge of what he has done, not knowing at the time the harm he was doing. To a man of his sensitive temperament, I know what it means. He will renounce all, and go out into the world a poor man to commence life anew. That in itself will be a great struggle. Ah, Richard! I know all you must have suffered, and are suffering even now ; but, believe me, Frank is quite sufficiently punished.’

Richard Dane looked at his brother, and felt Amy spoke the truth. Frank Dane seemed to have suddenly grown old, and there was a drawn, pained look about his face. He was the picture of an utterly ruined and broken-hearted man.

‘Is it right under these circumstances,’ went on Amy, ‘he should be sent out into the world to fight his battle alone? True, he married me under false pretences; but he has atoned for that wrong by his actions since I became his wife. Every word he has spoken is true,’ said Amy, with a slight flush on her face. ‘He must not be driven out like this, Richard. I am his wife, and I love him, and no matter what he has been, it is not for me to forsake him now. I should be unworthy of any man’s love if I did him this wrong. He has, you may say, done me a great wrong, and therefore has no claims upon me. I do not regard it in that light. He may have deceived me, but he loves me, and I love him. We are married, and therefore it is my duty to suffer with him, and to try and alleviate his sufferings.’

‘Think of my sufferings, Amy,’ said Richard Dane. ‘Am I not worthy to be recompensed for all I have gone through? Remember, you loved me once, and it was the man you loved then you thought you had married. Put yourself in my place, and you will see I deserve some share of your pity, sympathy, and love.’

‘You do, Richard. I acknowledge it fully,

freely. If justice were done, then Frank would suffer the full penalty of his fault, and I should surrender him. But there is such a thing as mercy, Richard, and to be just and merciful is better than to mete out justice alone. If Frank is sent out without a friend in the world, think what might happen. He has been insane; the madness has left him, but if he loses all support his mind may give way again. Think of the horror of such a thing! It would be cruelty indeed to drive him back to madness. With me by his side to watch and care for him, to pray for help for him, to love him, and assist him in the new battle of life he will have to fight, he will not despair, and may be saved such a cruel fate. Richard, I have to choose between you. It is indeed a bitter task to me, and I may be wrong in the choice I make. My own heart, however, tells me I am doing right.'

She laid her hand for a moment on Dr. Dane's arm, and looked pleadingly into his face. Then she went to Frank Dane, and clasped her arms round his neck.

'Husband,' she said in a broken voice—'my poor, tortured husband, how can I leave you? Look up at me, Frank. Be brave. Come what may, we will face the world together. I am your wife, and my choice must still be for you.'

With a cry of joy Frank Dane clasped her in his arms.

Richard Dane's grief was visible in his face, but all along he had surmised what Amy's decision would be.

'I will leave you,' said Dr. Dane huskily. 'I will call in a day or two; I can bear no more now. Good-bye, Amy; you have dealt me a bitter blow, but I can understand your feelings, and forgive you.'

Frank Dane grasped his brother's hand.

'We must settle other matters as speedily as possible,' he said.

Dr. Dane assented, and slowly left the room.

Frank Dane, left alone with his wife, felt like a coward. He dared not speak; he was afraid to do so after the confession he had made. Perhaps Amy had decided to remain with him from a sense of duty.

Amy was the first to speak.

'Richard—I mean Frank,' she said with a faint smile—'you must make all the reparation in your power to Richard. You have injured him more than ever a man was injured before, and he has forgiven you. He has acted nobly. Few men would have been so lenient. We must commence life again—a new life in a new land.'

'Yes, Amy,' said Frank; 'I have cruelly wronged him, but you shall see how I will atone for it. He does not know, nor do you know, Amy, how I shall make that atonement, but Richard shall be satisfied.'

Amy looked at him earnestly.

'What do you intend to do?' she asked in an alarmed voice.

'That is my secret at present, Amy. It came to me as you were making your decision, and speaking so pathetically and pleadingly to Richard. You shall see how brave I can be, and how I will act. It will be for the best, and you shall help me, Amy.'

She looked at him with a glad smile.

'That I will cheerfully do,' she said.

They sat and talked until late over the future.

'Leave me for a time, Amy,' said Frank. 'I must put some papers right and fix matters up for Richard. It will seem strange to me to start afresh, but it must be done.'

He kissed her fondly, and bade her good-night. When she reached the door, she turned, and saw him with his arms stretched out to her pleadingly. She ran back, and again he folded her in a long, lingering embrace.

He seemed loath to let her go from him. His heart felt as though it would break when he saw her leave the room.

Frank Dane had made a brave resolve. The woman he loved had chosen him, and his brother Richard had given way to her decision. But there was more than this to be done. Frank Dane knew now what a straight, plain duty lay before him. It would break his heart and ruin his life, but he would

do it. He knew he had looked upon Amy for the last time. He had again decided to save her from himself.

He sat down and commenced to write. As he did so, his tears came fast, but he never faltered in his set purpose. He felt he had been shown what to do, and he knew he must do it.

He wrote for a considerable time. Then he read what he had written, folded it carefully, and, placing it in a envelope, addressed it to Amy.

All was now quiet in the house—it was after midnight. Frank Dane took some gold from his desk and put it in his pocket. Then he crept silently upstairs to Amy's room. Noiselessly he opened it and went in.

She was sound asleep, tired out and weary with the painful scenes of the day. He looked at her, all the intense love he had for her shining in his eyes. The anguish within him almost broke him down, but his courage was firm.

He bent down and kissed her on the forehead. She stirred and sighed, but did not wake. Then, with a final look at her he loved so well, he left the room, went quietly downstairs, and let himself out into the street.

* * * * *

In the morning Amy naturally felt alarmed because Frank had not been to bed. She hurried on her dressing-gown and went down to his study.

It was empty, and she saw the letter addressed

to herself on the table. With trembling, eager hands she opened it.

She read it all, and then, abandoning herself to her deep grief, wept bitterly.

It was a long letter, and in it Frank Dane had expressed his purpose fully. He concealed nothing, and urged her to help him to work out his atonement by learning to again love his brother Richard, and then marry him.

‘You are not legally my wife, Amy,’ he wrote, ‘although I love you better than any man could love a woman. It is best that I should go, dearest. By leaving you I do you the greatest kindness, and you will bless me for it in years to come. Think of me as a dear friend, lost but not dead—for I shall not kill myself, Amy. No, that would be cowardly—you need have no fear of that. I am going to bury myself where you will never find me, and where I shall never be heard of again. I am going to live alone, far away from civilization.

‘You chose to spend your life with me, Amy, and I shall for ever bless you for that decision. It will be the one bright memory I shall carry with me, that in the hour of my adversity you chose to cast in your lot with mine. But I cannot accept your sacrifice, Amy. Richard is right : you belong to him. I thank God I have never injured you more than by deceiving you. Do not weep for me, Amy. I ask you to feel sorry—just a faint regret for my unworthy self—but do not grieve for me,

I shall find means, I have no doubt, of hearing how you are and how Richard is, and when you are married.

‘Amy, learn to love my brother as you loved me. Think of what he once was to you, and then I am sure your heart will turn to him. He is a man worthy of a good woman’s love, as you know, and he has been cruelly wronged.

‘Again, Amy, I have saved you from myself, and I believe God gave me back my reason in order that I might do so. I believe it is His will that you should help me to work out my forgiveness by making Richard happy.

‘Once more farewell, Amy, and may you be happier in the future than you have ever been in the past. I came to have one last look at you as you slept. It nearly broke my heart, but I could not leave without that mute farewell.

‘Forgive me, Amy, for all the wrong I have done, the sins I have committed. Again I say farewell. My own true love, your face will always be before me. It will be the one hope to cling to in this life, the one ray of comfort in a blank existence.

‘Show my brother Richard this letter. He will understand all. Farewell!’

‘Gone! Gone!’ moaned Amy. ‘Oh, Frank, why have you left me?’

A voice seemed to whisper to her: ‘He has done right. He has acted nobly. Now you can love his memory without fear.’

She sent for Richard Dane, and handed him his brother's letter.

Dr. Dane was much affected by it.

'Has he——' stammered Amy.

'No,' said Dr. Dane. 'You need have no fear of that, Amy. The man who could write such a letter would never be coward enough to take his own life. We must try and find him. Poor Frank! He has indeed acted nobly, and made full atonement.'

CHAPTER XXVI.

ALONE.

TWO years passed after Frank Dane disappeared. During that time Dr. Dane made every search for him, and Simeon Hare assisted him.

The sensation caused by the revelation of Frank Dane's personation of his brother, and his strange disappearance, had subsided, and the rightful Dr. Dane had taken up the practice in Sydney.

Amy rejoined her brother, who gladly welcomed her back, and also encouraged Dr. Dane in his efforts to regain Amy's love.

Where had Frank Dane gone? He had carried out his resolve, and had vanished no one knew where.

From Thursday Island a report reached Sydney that an attack had been made on the Lieutenant-

Governor of New Guinea, and that he had been saved by the gallantry of an Englishman, whose name was unknown.

Some weeks passed, and then came full particulars. The Lieutenant Governor had been paying a visit to a friendly tribe of natives, when a dastardly attack was made upon his party. Several of them were speared, and others died in great agony from poisoned wounds.

One native, more daring than the rest, rushed from the ambush and hurled a spear with terrific force full at the Governor's breast. He was saved from certain death by the heroism of a man who sprang forward from behind some low bushes, and, throwing himself in front of the Governor, received a fearful spear-wound in the side. He sank down at the Governor's feet, dying, his blood turning the fine white sand crimson as it trickled slowly to the feet of the man he had saved.

The Governor had the dying man carefully removed to his camping-place, where he received every care and attention, but eventually succumbed in terrible agony to his wound. Before he died this man related an extraordinary story.

'It appears,' wrote the Governor, 'that he had committed some great wrong in Sydney, and had fled to the wildest part of New Guinea, making his way thence from Thursday Island. For two years he had lived alone with a savage tribe.

‘His body was tattooed all over with various devices, and he had been wounded several times, his body being scarred with spear-thrusts. Strange to relate, the tribe that attacked the Lieutenant-Governor’s party had regarded this wanderer as a man possessed of remarkable powers. They believed him to be capable of guarding the tribe from dangers, and to assure them victory in case of war with other tribes.

‘The man stated he lived with the tribe, which he had fallen in with after unheard-of dangers and privations, for over eighteen months. During that period he had never seen a white man. The women of the tribe worshipped him as a god, and the men looked upon him with awe. He learned to make himself understood, and then found out from their language he was in the hands of the most dangerous, treacherous, cruel tribe in New Guinea. Escape was impossible, as he was closely watched. He was not killed, because of the superstition of the people in regard to him.

‘Once he made an attempt, and after a week’s hiding in the dense tropical country he was recaptured. He was then tortured, and subjected to unheard-of indignities, and given to understand if he attempted to escape again he would be roasted alive.

‘From that time his life was a misery to him, and often he felt inclined to put an end to his

existence. But a resolve he had made, to work out his atonement for the wrong he had done, held him back from self-destruction.

‘As month after month passed he became weak and ill, and at one time lay at death’s door. One of the women of the tribe nursed him tenderly, and saved his life, and then refused to leave him. Far away from his kind, living with savages, he became strangely interested in all their ways, and learned much about the country from them. This information he imparted to me,’ wrote the Governor, ‘and it is invaluable.

‘Before the attack was made on the party, a council of war was held, and when this man heard what it was proposed to do, he resolved to go with the tribe, and if possible save the lives of some of his countrymen, even at the cost of his own.

‘When the attack was made he was guarded by half a dozen men of the tribe, who feared he might try to regain his liberty and join the white men.

‘When the spearing commenced, he seized a club from the savage standing nearest to him, and dashed out the black’s brains. In their astonishment at this sudden onslaught, the others were for the moment bewildered.

‘They quickly recovered from their surprise, and ran after him in the direction of the beach.

‘He managed to hide himself in some dense undergrowth, and they rushed past him.

‘At this moment,’ writes the Governor, ‘I had walked rapidly up from the launch to assist in the rescue of my men.

‘One of the blacks who had guarded the man raised his spear and hurled it at me.

‘The man who saved my life saw the movement, and, darting from his hiding-place, threw himself in front of me and received a fatal spear-wound in his side. It was a heroic action, and he gave his life for mine.

‘Before he died he went on to tell me a most extraordinary story, which I think I read something about in a Sydney paper nearly two years ago. He said his name was Frank Dane, and that he at one time escaped from an asylum in London, and had his brother, who was the image of him in every way, placed there in his stead.

‘He explained how he took his brother’s place in the world, and how he married the lady his brother, Dr. Dane, was engaged to. The story is so remarkable that I refrain from publishing it until I have consulted with his brother, who, he says, is Dr. Richard Dane, of Sydney. Frank Dane seemed to me to be of sound mind, but the miserable life he had led was sufficient to have turned his brain.

‘Whatever wrong he may have done he has amply atoned for by his heroic act and by the valuable information he was fortunately able to place at my disposal. He has visited parts of New

Guinea that have hitherto remained unexplored, and he gives a graphic description of the country and the inhabitants, which will be of the greatest use in future explorations.

‘Before Frank Dane died he asked me to write two letters at his dictation, which I have forwarded to his brother, Dr. Dane, of Sydney, and to Miss Amy Montrose, of Park House, Double Bay.

‘The dying man referred in a most pathetic manner to the wrong he had done. I explained to him that, being insane at the time, he exaggerated his conduct, but he refused to see it in that light. His chief regret seemed to be that he could not live a life of hardship for a longer period in order to prolong his suffering for his crime.

‘I am sorry to say his wound was poisoned, and he suffered great agony before he died. He had, however, a peaceful end, and the last words he spoke were terms of endearment to the lady he had married and to his brother, and he died asking for their forgiveness.

‘To me the memory of Frank Dane will ever be present. Had he not given his life for mine, I should have died an agonized death. I shall never think of the wrong he did, but bear in mind the one brave action that redeemed the past. It was as brave an action as ever won the Victoria Cross, for Frank Dane knew, when he saved my life, that he must die in my place. I am sure it will be a

comfort to Dr. Dane, his brother, and to Miss Montrose, to know he died so nobly, and how generously he gave his life for mine.

‘He was buried in a manner befitting his end, and a monument will be erected, at my expense, at the Governor’s residence, to commemorate his noble deed. A cross has been already erected where he fell, and when any travellers to this far-off land look upon it, it will teach them to remember how an Englishman can face death and sacrifice his life to save others.

‘I ought to add that Frank Dane’s action not only saved my life, but the lives, probably, of the whole of my party, for when the blacks saw him fall by a spear thrown by one of their men, they turned and fled back into the country. They evidently thought his death at their hands would bring some terrible disaster upon them.’

This was the tenor of the Lieutenant-Governor’s letter which appeared in the Sydney press.

It caused a sensation, and Frank Dane’s noble death obliterated the memory of his former deception.

Amy Montrose, for such she was still, read the letter Frank Dane had dictated to her, and although it caused her pain, it gave her relief. Frank Dane concluded :

‘It is my dying wish, Amy, that if you can love my brother Richard, you will marry him. Only by

your doing so can my atonement be complete, for it is by this means I restore you to him. I am glad to die, because it will completely free you. I knew that, while you were uncertain as to whether I were alive or dead, you would have some scruples of conscience in marrying Richard. I know you felt you were my wife before God, whatever man's laws made you. Now you are entirely free, and you need hesitate no longer. Obey my dying wish if you can, Amy, and be to Richard more—ay, even more—than you have been to me. In years to come you may perhaps remember me as an erring man, who did all in his power to atone for the wrong he had done.'

To Richard Dane he dictated a message in a somewhat similar strain. He urged him to make Amy his wife, and to find happiness in the society of the woman he loved.

'It was better that I should go and leave no trace behind. My life since I left Sydney has not been a happy one, and I did not intend it should be. After all I had done, it would not have been just that I should find happiness on earth. I trust I am forgiven for my sins, and that when I am dead I may deserve peace and rest. Since I was wounded I have received every kindness from the Lieutenant-Governor and all around me. I feel he can hardly credit the story of my life, which I have told him. Tell it him yourself, Richard, and then he must believe. When

you are happy with Amy, and your children are playing around you, think sometimes of your poor brother Frank. Tell your children, and Amy's children, how I died, so that, if they ever learn the true story of my life, they will not think harshly of me—not have a bitter memory of the man who wronged you so. Farewell, Richard. May you be happy with a happiness that was not meant for me.'

These letters did much to draw Amy and Richard more closely together.

Amy Montrose was not a woman to easily forget how she had loved the dead man who had wronged them both. She was not a woman to weep over a husband's grave, and then console herself in another man's arms in six months. But she was a woman who could judge for herself the difference between right and wrong, and she felt it was her duty to love Richard Dane, and be his wife when she felt the proper time had come.

CHAPTER XXVII.

'NOT YET, RICHARD.'

SOME weeks after the news of Frank Dane's death was received, Dr. Dane paid a visit to Park House. Oswald Montrose gave him a hearty welcome, for he liked Richard Dane exceedingly.

The something he had found wanting in Frank was supplied by Richard.

'Yes, Richard, I think you have a chance—a very good chance of receiving a favourable answer.'

This was in reply to Dr. Dane's anxious question as to whether Oswald Montrose thought Amy would accept him as her husband.

'I do not say she will give you a decided answer at once,' he went on; 'but I feel certain in time she will consent to be your wife. It is extraordinary to me how she failed to recognise the many strange phases of Frank's nature during his stay here. I was convinced there was something wrong about him, and tried hard to dissuade Amy from marrying him. But when they were married, and Frank recovered his senses, I honestly confess I was deceived by him.'

'Thank you for your encouragement,' said Dr. Dane; 'I must hear from Amy's own lips what my fate is to be. I can wait for her. I have waited many years, and one more will not make much difference, provided I know I am safe with her. Since I took up the practice I have done well, and my income now is considerable. Happily Frank was no spendthrift, and he did not get rid of much of my money. I can understand Frank deceiving Amy, for he easily deceived such men as Dr. Simpson and Simeon Hare. What I can hardly fathom is the extraordinary control he

exercised over himself. He must have been slowly but surely recovering his reason during the whole of that time.’

‘You have had a lucky escape, Richard,’ said Oswald. ‘I am afraid I cannot bring myself to give much credit to Frank for your release. His conduct afterwards was noble; but had you not regained your liberty, I am afraid the temptation to keep the position he had won would have been too strong for him.’

‘I do not agree with you, Oswald,’ said Dr. Dane. ‘In time, Frank’s conscience would have brought him to confess all. His actions after the discovery prove that. Let us think the best we can of the dead.’

‘You are right, Richard. We ought not to malign a dead man. Poor Frank! what an unhappy life he led!’ said Oswald Montrose.

‘What an escape Amy had,’ said Dr. Dane. ‘It makes one shudder to think of all that might have happened had Frank not become sane in such a providential manner.’

‘No man could have exercised more control over himself than Frank did at that particular time,’ said Oswald.

Later on in the day Dr. Dane had an opportunity of speaking to Amy Montrose. He pleaded eloquently, and touched her heart.

She knew he loved her, and had been faithful to her for many years. The dead man’s wishes

were to Amy sacred, but at the same time, as she looked at Dr. Dane's fine manly form and honest face, she felt it would not be a hard task for her to learn to love him.

'What is your answer, Amy?' said Dr. Dane, when he had asked her to be his wife. 'You said "Yes" to me in the old days, Amy, before trouble came upon me: what answer will you give me now?'

Amy Montrose put her hand on his, and said:

'Richard, you deserve the love of a better woman than I am. You remained faithful, but I was—shall I say led astray? I cannot say I was unfaithful or untrue, because I went to the altar with Frank believing him to be you. Had you both landed here together, I should have known you were the man I loved; but when Frank came out alone, he deceived me as easily as he had done others. I will be your wife,' she went on, 'but not yet, Richard. You must give me a little more time. It is not many weeks since we heard of poor Frank's death. I look upon my marriage with him as a sacred tie, and as binding upon me as my marriage to you will be. You must see, Richard, that it is impossible for me to forget in so short a time that Frank was my husband, and that I loved him. You would, I am sure, not wish it to be otherwise. Again I say I will be your wife, but not yet, Richard.'

‘I can wait for you, Amy, as I have waited before,’ said Dr. Dane. ‘You have made me very happy. Now you have promised to be my wife, I shall work with a light heart. I will not ask you when you will become my wife, Amy; I am content to know that when your own good feelings tell you, I shall not have long to wait.’

They talked on for some time, and then Dr. Dane told Oswald Montrose what his sister’s answer was.

‘It is as I thought,’ said Oswald Montrose, ‘and she is right. You know yourself she is right. Believe me, when Amy decides to marry you, she will love you. I am quite certain she would not marry you if she felt she could not be a loving wife in every respect.’

When Dr. Dane returned to his house he felt strangely elated. The trials he had undergone only made his pleasure in life and liberty more keen.

Even James Fairton, who had never been quite at his ease with Frank Dane, or able to thoroughly understand him, was astonished at the changes that had taken place.

Dr. Dane often caught his old servant looking at him with wondering eyes, and occasionally he heard him mutter :

‘And to think I mistook Frank for him ! What a darned old fool I have been !’

Dr. Dane, a night or two after Amy had given

him her answer, went with Oswald Montrose and his intended wife to the Lyceum Theatre. During the interval, Oswald and Dr. Dane went into the lounge to smoke a cigarette, leaving Amy chatting to a friend.

Dr. Dane stood near a bright light, which threw a glare on to his face.

A fine-looking military man stepped from the outer balcony into the lounge. When he saw Dr. Dane, he gave an exclamation of surprise and amazement. For a few moments he could not speak. He seemed awe-struck, as though he had received a sudden shock. Then he said, still looking at Dr. Dane :

‘Pardon my apparent rudeness, but when I looked at you, I thought I saw a man risen from the dead. You must be Richard Dane ; you are the living image of your dead brother Frank—the man who so nobly saved my life. I am Sir William Fenton, the Lieutenant-Governor of New Guinea.’

Dr. Dane grasped his outstretched hand as he said :

‘I am Richard Dane, Sir William, and I think you will believe my brother’s story now.’

‘After seeing the extraordinary likeness, yes,’ replied Sir William. ‘I may be pardoned for being sceptical before.’

The ‘curtain’ bell rang, and they had to resume their seats.

Dr. Dane had introduced Oswald Montrose, who invited the Lieutenant-Governor to Park House.

Sir William promised to come, in order to see Amy Montrose, and also to hear the strange story of his life from Richard Dane.

‘Amy, you see that fine-looking gentleman?’ said Dr. Dane, as he took his seat beside her.

‘Yes. Who is he, Richard?’

‘Sir William Fenton, the Lieutenant-Governor of New Guinea,’ said Dr. Dane.

Amy gave a perceptible start as she asked hurriedly:

‘And Frank saved his life?’

‘Yes,’ said Dr. Dane. ‘Oswald has asked him to Park House, and he has promised to come.’

‘I am so glad,’ said Amy. ‘I want to hear him describe how poor Frank saved his life. I am sure he will tell the story well. He looks as though he could appreciate a noble deed.’

Amy Montrose was not disappointed when she heard Sir William tell the story of how Frank Dane met his death.

Simeon Hare returned to London when the story of Frank Dane’s death reached Sydney. He had been on an unprofitable errand, but it had not damaged his reputation, as his theory that Frank Dane had taken Richard Dane’s place in the world turned out to be correct.

He wrote to Dr. Dane soon after his arrival,

stating he was in full work again, and that he had seen Dr. Simpson, who had not yet recovered from the shock he received when he found Dr. Dane had been detained in Frank's place.

'I was at Westminster the other night,' wrote Simeon, 'and as I stood at the entrance gate to the House, I thought of that night when Frank Dane successfully carried out his wonderful and daring plan. It all came back to me so vividly that I fancied I saw you coming through the gate. I may tell you that since I have returned I have had to relate the story of "the Doctor's Double" to scores of newspaper men. In order to make all the accounts readable, I varied them a good deal. There is a smattering of truth in most of them, but I've kept the main facts to myself as much as possible. I may, when I am hard up, have a shy at a sensational yarn. If ever you see a book with the title of "The Doctor's Double" on it, you'll know who has written it.'

After Sir William Fenton had paid his promised visit to Park House, and related the story of Frank Dane's death and his dying request, Dr. Dane again asked Amy when she would consent to marry him.

'In a year, Richard,' she said. 'You must give me a year.'

'I will, Amy,' he said. 'You have made

Frank’s atonement complete, and given me back the love he took from me.’

In her own room that night, Amy looked at a portrait of Frank Dane for a long time.

‘Poor Frank!’ she said softly, and with a wistful look in her eyes.

THE END.

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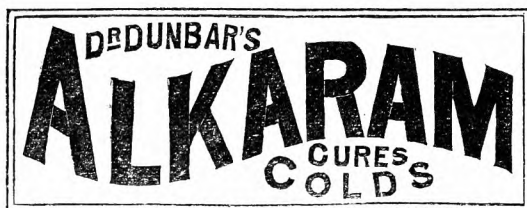
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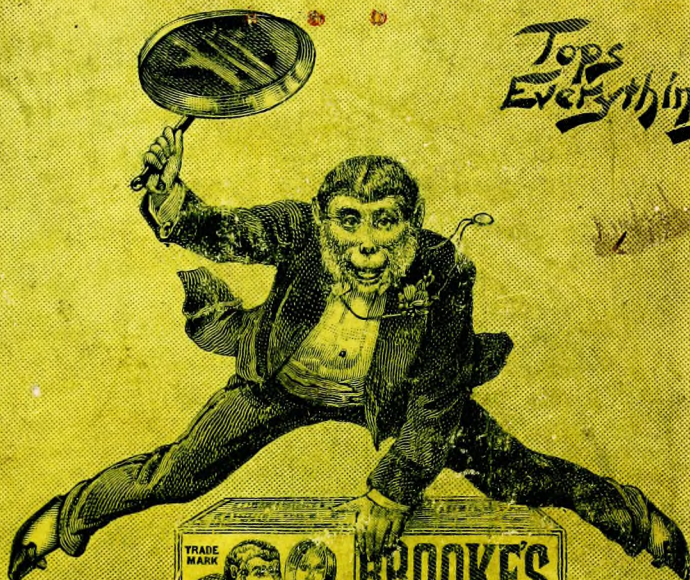
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